

EXCLUSIVE | ADNAN R. KHAN CAUGHT IN AN IRAQI FIREFIGHT

MACLEAN'S

CANADA'S WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE | www.macleans.ca

APRIL 26 2004

**HARD
LANDING**

Who wins
if Air Canada
fails?

**DYING TO
LOOK BETTER**

The perils
of makeover
mania

Diana Krall
comes home

BY PAUL WELLS PAGE 32

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SPAIN MARKS

Spain isn't just Spanish: there's a lot to love in the Basque Country, Navarre, Aragon, Catalonia, Castile, Galicia, Girona, Madrid, Murcia, Navarre, Rioja, Valencia, and the Canary Islands. And the historic cities of Toledo, Seville, and Córdoba do it all again. In these 17th-century cities, the world's oldest olive oil is still being made by hand in perfect harmony. Live out your dreams in the heart of the city where the world's oldest olive oil is still being made by hand in perfect harmony. Live out your dreams in the heart of the city where the world's oldest olive oil is still being made by hand in perfect harmony. Live out your dreams in the heart of the city where the world's oldest olive oil is still being made by hand in perfect harmony.

Be married by a Spanish priest.



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What's the deal with the country's big red maple leaves?

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GREAT GREEN NORTH Canadian gardens are second to none, as five of the best show.

'Blame parents for the current lack of courtesy. Children are taught to expect everything and are denied nothing—they have no manners at all.'

—Martha Adamson, Vancouver, BC

The rude age

In regards to your cover story on the rise of civility in our society, I work in the fast food industry at a drive-through window and although most customers are pleasant, what I can't understand is why some get so snark over something that is truly insignificant ("Rude civilities," April 5). I mean, we don't purposely mess up orders, but sometimes mistakes happen. These people get stressed, their blood pressure skyrockets and they jump up and down like toddlers because they got the wrong coffee. That does not excuse as far as my mistake, but, guess, to make such a scene in public over such a minor thing? I truly feel sorry for these people—they go through life arguing and fighting about parking places at the mall or waiting behind someone who has more items as a one-to-eight line. Big deal. Really, big deal.

Heather Geric, Whitecourt

I'm sure you will get lots of e-mails and letters from people with stories to tell about how they have experienced rude behaviour. However, I'm not one of these people. I can't really remember people who are, at the very least, civil and who often are quite polite. Even in the service industry, the waiters, waitresses and the clerks I encounter are courteous. Rudeness certainly exists, but I'm not convinced it is any worse than it was years ago, not as I am convinced it will be getting worse in the future.

Kenneth Campbell, North Bay, Ont.

Popular music is the soundtrack of our lives in the '90s, is echoed and reinforced so strongly: social awareness, the environmental, feminist and civil rights movements, and persons that led to the end of an unjust war. But what can be said about the rap music playing in the heads of so many adolescents today: often these rap artists encourage aggressive, violent, self-worshiping, sexist and superficial behaviour. Things are only going to get worse once these kids reach adulthood.

Alan Lovegrove, Sudbury, Ont.



Boor wars | The middle finger—even a broken one—touches a nerve

For the authors up too far? Some thought so. But you certainly took notice. Letters are still flooding in about Charlie Gelin's story on the swagags of politeness. While many sympathize with a moral—and shared their worst experiences, excerpted on page 12—a few disagreed. "I see his up people speak their minds," wrote one reader. "At least their true colours are exposed."

So your national affairs writer Charlie Gelin is ticked off with all these inconsiderate leeches whose middle finger is the most often used part of their bodies? Well, he shouldn't be. Working for *Maclean's*, a magazine that recently featured a cover story on the 7/7 or Park Slope and a lengthy article on Tom Green, he should realize that ordinary people are not being rude. They are simply expressing those who the media holds up as celebrities.

Don Gillett, Port au Port, Quebec

What better way to offend than vulgarity is alive and well in Canada than by focusing the middle finger on your front cover.

Now, I just have to explain to my seven- and 10-year-old boys why I'm reading such a "rude" magazine.

Michael Shi, Waterloo, Ont.

Despite thousands of years of social evolution, we are still animals—we fight for any thing believed to be in short supply. Where animals fight over a dwindling food supply, human beings might kill for supremacy on the highway or the best concert seats. Regrettably, with our current society focused so intently on what we may have to give up, co-operation, mutual respect and good behaviour become dependent on whether or not we perceive there is enough of everything to go around.

Lynne Jamieson, Hamilton

No justification

We are writing to express our disappointment in your publishing Barbara Anand's support for the murder of a Muslim cleric and spokesman for Palestine ("Justifiable homicide," Column, April 5). If anyone had submitted an article calling the murder of Anas Shanon justifiable, I am certain you would brand it as terrorist hate literature. Yet you provide a cloak of respectability for Anand's brand of hate. When you choose sides in such cases, you abandon your responsibility to your readers to inform, not to inflame. Shame on you.

Malcolm and Frank Smith, Vancouver, Ont.

Just a note of appreciation for Barbara Anand's forthright and honest reporting of Middle East news. With all the misinformation and disinformation flying around regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, her tell-it-as-it-is style is a breath of fresh air. The Israeli government should be honoured for her for being one of the few journalists outside of that country with the胆量 to write the truth when most of the world's media continue to promote an anti-Israel bias. Keep it up, Mr. Anand!

Ray Thompson, Greater Sudbury, Ont.

I am outraged that you provided Barbara Anand with a full page to vent her hatred while hiding behind all the usual platitudes. Anand can certainly express her malevolent opinions in the comfort of her own kitchen, but I do not want to have to read it in a public forum.

Howard Smith, Hamilton, Ont.



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Canada the violent

In dumping the blame for hockey's brutality at the door of the NHL's New York City head office, you conveniently ignore the reality that hockey violence is primarily a Canadian product ("No need to light," *Cover*, March 22). Todd Bertuzzi, Alexei Yashin, Mike Johnson, Dale Hunter—Canadians all. So are almost all of the league's penalty minute leaders, though Canadians now make up just over 50 per cent of the players. It's time to take a hard look at our own thugs-in hockey culture.

Glen Matthews, Oak Horsey

My family and I attended a WHL game in Regina last year. We told the kids that if a fight broke out, we would leave. There were no fights, but there was an incident. Two players who desperately wanted to fight were held apart by two linesmen until they were crumpled into the penalty box. It was not a fight—it was the embarrassing inability of two young and talented men to control their emotions.

Unlucky Hoopered, Regina

Canadians should remember that in the early 20th century, another one of our beloved sports was nearly disappeared because of uncontrolled violence—lacrosse. Before the NHL drops entirely off the face of the sports landscape, it might be relegated first to the fringes of TV along with roller derby, spelling bees and darts. What will the NHL do then to attract large multinational sponsors and TV contracts?

Allen Kopenans, Mississauga, Ont.

Acts of random violence in our homes, on the streets, on world battlefields, on TV and in movies are becoming increasingly frequent. What will it take for the NHL to stop endorsing the same in "our good old hockey game"? Some of us still believe in playing fair.

Dorothy Bialik, Burna Lake, B.C.

Man power

Why is it that in "Kids vs. career" (*Cover*, March 15) you give the impression that only women stay home with the children? Men also stay home with children while women continue their career. I, for example, have stayed home with my three children, now 16, 15 and 13, away their birth. I was



Almost all of the National Hockey League's penalty-minute leaders are Canadians.

more enjoyable being there for their morning needs at home and school.

David Caldwell, Ontario

In the choice between child rearing and professional fulfillment, not a struggle for men as well? Do men not head out the door to work with a yearning backward glance? Do men not feel guilty about missing the boy years of their children's lives? I wonder if there has really been much change, or if there is still a huge gender split on the issue.

Cecil Redwood, Toronto

I am amazed that no one has commented on the danger that a father, who may be preying the kids today, decides tomorrow to move in with someone else—while at the same time, later in life, with no career experience and, therefore, no job prospects or pension. Statistically, this is a big danger, and some thing all women should consider before agreeing to stay at home full-time with the kids.

Kristina Miller, Ottawa

“What kind of message does government send by providing nothing for stay-at-home parents?”

I feel sorry for a woman who feels insecure about choosing motherhood over a career in fear that others would view this choice as demeaning. Lacrosse, motherhood is a dangerous sport.

those who relied external pressures to achieve social worth and acceptance often wind up unhappy and frustrated with their lives.

Pierre MacGillivray, Ontario

It is unfortunate that being a stay-at-home mother has been so devalued by our society. Government is eager to subsidize daycare for working parents, but provides nothing for people who stay at home, and who bear the full responsibility and cost of daycare. What kind of message does this send to women who wish to stay at home? Clearly, it tells them they have little or no value in our society.

Robert Muir, Hamilton, B.C.

Bad call

In the Upfront section ("ScoreCard," March 15), you gave the thumbs down to a decision by Ottawa to grant \$200,000 to the World Championships of Adventure Racing, a sort of one-day triathlon, to be held in Newfoundland this August. The thumbs down implied that taxpayers were to be the casualties of this decision. I beg to differ. Not only do the province and the organizers deserve credit and financial support for recruiting and hosting such a prestigious, world-class event but, more importantly, the athletes deserve the financial support the grant will provide. Canada needs to attract more such international athletic events. A big thumbs up to the Rock and organizers of the Adventure Racing World.

Jim Oliver, Toronto, Ont.



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MAIL



Canada primarily because of the Canadian perspective on gay issues. Shortly after we arrived here three years ago, a census was taken. Imagine our delight at being able to check the marital status box, "common law." By the time the next census comes around, we can even check "married" if we choose. The one fact that many Canadians don't see what the big deal is about recognizing gay relationships, is a very big deal to us. Thank you, Canada.

Darryl Macdonald, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Voter motivation

Allen Gregg is a perceptive and highly respected observer of Canadian politics, but he must have had a headache when he wrote "Why don't people vote?" (Issue, April 5). Canadians do vote when they think it's necessary. For example, they have voted out the Mulroney Tories and the B.C. NDP. When there are no compelling issues, the vote falls off.

Gerald Woods, Fredericton, N.B.

It makes no difference if one votes. As soon as the votes are counted, the elected leader vows to keep his promises in the election, but a week later it's all forgotten—and the dance begins again four years later.

Harvey Hollaway, Grande Prairie, Alta.

Strangely, the issue where the ordinary citizen has the most influence, and is most directly influenced, is the one with the least voter participation. Municipal elections put local governments in power who make decisions that affect us in our everyday lives, including such mundane matters as roads, transportation, water, sewerage and even when and where we can or can't go shopping. Yet turnout for municipal elections are typically the lowest of all three levels of government.

Richard Westhead, Seattle

I was privileged to read Allen Gregg's constructive criticisms to the present in/affair once towards politics. Using policies, incentives, encouraging charity and social development services, and clearing up the volunteer organizations and NGOs. I think it's clear that deserve a closer look. If Canadians feel their voices matter, they will be encouraged to participate.

Henry Lattimer, London, Ont.

Statement of love

Your March 29 article "Honey, you know" along with a picture of us by Niagara Falls on the magazine's cover has been one of the most fantastic experiences of our lives. We understand there are people who believe same-sex couples should not be allowed to register marriage. What these individuals don't understand is that we aren't registering anything. We are adding to our lives. We are a committed couple who love each other and want our relationship to be recognized by our family, friends and governments. And, most importantly, by God. Those who believe it is marriage is only for having children are mistaken. Couples don't get married to have children, they get married because it is the first demonstration of love and commitment.

Michael Orr and Thomas Pate, Greater Kailash

Here's my answer to your March 29 same sex marriage cover question "Got a problem with this?" Yes, but I do. I object to being branded as homophobic simply because I hold a viewpoint different from those in the gay camp. And I also object that the same sex marriage issue is being compared to African Americans once not being allowed to drink from the same water fountains in Canada. By inference, that makes me a racist for disagreeing with the gays on this issue. That comparison is dangerous and unfair.

Chris Henking, Williamsport, Ont.

I am a 17.5 citizen with a Japanese same sex partner of 11 years. We have enjoyed

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MACLEAN'S



Rude Rage: Tales of random incivility

In our April 3 *Literary* "Rude Awakening," we asked you to send us stories of *brutish behavior*. And did you ever! Hundreds of them. Here are some of the more colorful—and appalling—random-act-of-incivility submissions. See more at www.cbc.ca/cn.

Scrim: An accountant's office for my 2 p.m. meeting. He arrives at 2:35—far too late in a meeting. He saw me at 2:05. He arrived late into his office by yelling "Hello!" twice so I'll never be guilty of an attention deficit. He didn't see my name on a modulus himself, didn't shake hands, didn't apologize for the wait. His entire attitude was pure lip off. And this is someone who's in business—born in a barn, perhaps, but still in business.

Neal Bell, Toronto

My husband and I were shopping at a Home Depot. When it was our turn to pay, the cashier had to call for a price check. The man in line behind us started to leave me, yelling, "Get through the f—ing line! I'll pay the difference, just get your ass moving." Finally my husband had had enough, walked up about an inch from his face and started leaning him over it. I was really traumatized by this episode. I have MS and it scared me to have a seizure for weeks following.

Alida McCallish, Burnaby, B.C.

My heart stopped takes place on the subway. A person in ATIS, sometimes a huge fat-foged banquet or fewer than three steps—with the attendant smelling of lip and finger-bik and waving at the leechpated rail—throws the packaging under the seat, bays, then glares at those looking on in amazement.

Evie Thompson, Toronto

A young man walked up to one of two tellers at a bank, who began processing his business. Suddenly, the man's cellphone

“

We grabbed the man's bag on my uniform and ripped it off, revealing my black lace bra. Then all hell broke loose.

ring. He ended a short conversation with the words, "I'll be right there." Then he walked out to continue his conversation in person with another young man in a car parked by the front door. Meanwhile, the teller—stuck in the middle of this idiot's banking procedure—couldn't leave her computer to serve other customers. When he finally came back, many in our line of 30 demanded that he go to the back. He rudely replied, "No, it's my turn to be



"I struggled against simply hitting everybody."

served." This proves that cellphones do indeed cause brain damage.

John McCallish, Toronto

I am a single mother of a five-and-a-half-year-old boy. Whenever I take my son, he holds doors open for people. But once out of 10 people walk by him without saying thank you or even looking at him. It breaks my heart. What makes it even harder is that he always says, "You're welcome."

Sarah Hughes, Kingston, Ont.

The term "customer service" is used way too loosely these days. I have a small student loan and had a simple question about paying it back, but the call to the bank made me so angry. This woman started to react in a snarly tone, cut me off mid-sentence and even told me to leave. I didn't leave the bank like that when I asked to borrow money, so why should they treat me like that when they want it back?

Dennis Matus, Lewis, N.S.

In 1999, I became a Toronto Transit Commission operator. Since then, I've been abused and mistreated, and some of my fellow operators have been verbally abused of times. All of this

I've shocked and will continue to. It's the constant, cruel, unthinking rudeness that's out of control at my work. Every day I have to struggle against getting to simply being anybody.

John McCallish, Wexley, Ont.

I was waiting a San Diego to Toronto flight on an Air Canada flight. As passengers were boarding, a man came on with two hockey bag-sized rollerboards and backpacks on both his chest and back. I turned and told him, "I'm sorry, Mr. X, but we'll have to check one of your bags—the flight is full and you're over your allowance." His reply: "Just let me go to my seat."

Me: Mr. X, you are over your allowance for bags. You can't bring that on.

Mr. X: You touch that and you'll be sorry.

Me: Is that a threat?

Mr. X: No, a promise.

Me: Well, Mr. X, please rap off the plane and return to the gate.

Mr. X: You f—ing bitch!

He grabbed the same braver on the breast pocket of my uniform and ripped it off, revealing my black lace bra. Mr. X, in line behind him, grabbed him in a headlock while I simultaneously pushed him off me and, reflexively, all hell broke loose. The end of the story? I wiped my tears, pinned my dress, let Mr. X ride to Toronto, thanked Mr. Y and doubted my career choice for 24 months after that.

Michelle Pink, London, Ont.

Recently, a friend and I decided to have lunch in the food court of a local mall. With only me and my friend in line, I ordered a chicken Caesar salad. The guy behind the counter walked. The chicken was going to take 10 minutes to heat and then he told us a long story. So I changed my order to the salad without chicken. Once again he looked at me like I was insane and guaranteed that the "insane" lettuce wouldn't be back up yet. I thanked him, turned and went to the Burger King next door. Meanwhile, my friend, crumpled on the floor in hysterics, proceeded to order a "Chicken Caesar salad, please."

Wanda Bold, Prince, Ont.

Last December I greeted a fellow who walked into the art gallery where I work. He responded, "You couldn't pay money out of my cold dead hand for any of this stuff!"

Katherine Whitbread, Vancouver

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UPFRONT



ScoreCard

▼ Beach
Students of Vancouver's famed nude playground were treated to a view of a different kind of beach scene. Planned erection of four residential towers will offer students in the view, say beach boys. Proposed suites, located at floors of the hotel tower, has Vancouver University a playground major would love.

▼ Tiger
Seems the entire 'g' stands for grapes. Pedro's got it—the guy working miles out at Florida's Walt Disney World— is accused of molesting women as they posed for photos. "Bitchy," you say? No, say police, accident only is "voluntary." And he was caught on film.

▼ Health Canada
How to focus food rules and allow manufacturers to forbid any product with vitamins and minerals. Idea has designers upset. Details crop with vitamin C. Cola with calcium? Cigarettes with beta carotene? The healthy way to die.

▼ Photo Radar
Someone is crashing someone's privacy radar. Says Arlene, comedian, even a newspaper box have been used to commit 13 assaults in as many months. News cameras filled with negatives, but news for drivers, great for police. A warning to catch the person is driving— it's only, one suspect.

▲ Joseph
Zacariasz is not able to name the plane, ever again. Invention of answering machine in 1948, died at 11. See Blackboard. Secretary employed a desk full of equipment to capture messages. Hand now is machine. The machine is still high, but one can try.

Politics | The unravelling of a very public figure

Say what you want about New Democrat MP Steven Robinson—after 25 morning years in federal politics, little is left unsaid—he's not one to run from the consequences of his actions. There are any number of examples: coming out as Canada's first openly gay MP, risking prison for being present at the staged suicide of a terminally ill woman, going to jail for participating in Claycoast Sound logging protests. He's also been pilloried for holding visiting U.S. President Ronald Reagan, kicked out of China, and taken to task for staging a confrontation at an Israeli checkpoint.

Through every controversy the veteran MP for Burnaby-Douglas has stood—never far from a television camera—on what he saw as the moral high ground. That changed profoundly last Thursday when a terrified Robinson forced the camera to admit to the theft of a child, shoplifting an expensive piece of jewelry as a tale he extended on Good Friday. "Something just snapped in this moment of utter irrationality," he said, provid-



NDP leader Jack Layton supports medical leave, Robinson at his press conference, flanked by partner Alex Bessie and Vancouver East MP Loby Davies.

ing few other details. He added that he would be taking a medical leave from politics, and was receiving therapy to deal with "severe stress and emotional pain"—some of that, he hinted, from the logging efforts of a near fatal fall in a hiking accident in 1997.

Robinson admits taking a piece of jewellery, said by friends to be a ring valued at \$50,000, from a customs auction in Richmond, B.C., in what seems an act of career suicide. The site was under video surveillance and, he allows, his identity was known to staff. He says he turned the item over to police on April 13 after failing to reach to come over the Easter weekend.

Robinson says he won't evade taking "full responsibility for my actions should charges be laid." And he is not an executive nor will decide whether to resign when he is charged with the hanging election. The Liberals have long planned an assault on his Burnaby stronghold, claiming Robinson is vulnerable. Until now, no one knew just how vulnerable he really was. **KEN MACQUEEN**

Quote of the week | 'Nobody likes to see dead people on their television screens.' U.S. President **GEORGE W. BUSH** regarding the recent carnage while defending his reluctance to stay the course in Iraq.

COVER STORY BY MICHAEL

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WORLD

THE WEST BANK Unraveling what amounts to new borders for Israel, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon vowed to hang on to six Jewish settlements in the West Bank as he fleshed out his plans to pull out of the Gaza Strip. The area contains about 90,000 of the approximately 240,000 Jewish settlers in the disputed territory captured in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. The unilateral plan was sharply denounced by the Palestinian leadership and UN chief Kofi Annan for abandoning the so-called road map for peace, it received more muted criticism from Canada and the European Parliament. But the scheme was strongly endorsed by President George W. Bush, who appeared to be encouraging decades of Washington policy over the West Bank—further entangling the U.S. anywhere in the Muslim world. Bush also came out against allowing Palestinians to return to their old homes in Israel after a Palestinian state is created, and he urged Egypt to help the process by taking responsibility for Gaza security after Israel withdraws.

U.S./A The bipartisan panel investigating the Sept. 11 attacks publicly flayed America's two biggest intelligence organizations, the FBI and CIA, for complicity in failed thinking that kept counterterrorism information from being shared with criminal investigators and each other. The CIA came under particular scrutiny for not passing along critical information about key al-Qaeda operatives taking flight lessons in the U.S.

GOOGLED The world's most popular search engine is under fire in Britain and California for its proposed fire-e-mail service Gmail. A lawsuit in Google's plan to scan customers' e-mails for keywords—including medical conditions—in order to direct ads. California legislators call this an invasion of privacy. Google says it is merely an extension of what it does now while people use its service to search the Web; it says the pitch is along the line of the search.

SURVIVOR In one of the world's little miracles, an 8-year-old California girl, Ruby Basmajian, survived 18 days in a bushy forest following a car crash that claimed the life of her mother. The 8-year-old had survived on dry needles and Canada, which she had seen on



THE BALLOT While the Middle East was blowing itself apart and Western democracies lamented bin Laden's yet-to-be-captured, South Africans lined up for hours Oct. 9 in Soweto township for the third election since the end of apartheid 12 years ago. The specters of eligible voters cast ballots the African National Congress was re-elected.

usually little bundles beside her shoes while she waited to be rescued.

TOOLS OF TERROR A 37-year-old man, from the Seattle area, son of a prominent investment counselor, was charged with possessing guns, a deadly biological toxin that was accessible to Soviet-era secret police.

Faiz Karam, a 37-year-old Canadian originally from Pakistan, was sentenced to five years in prison for trying to smuggle 32

double-edged razor blades in his carry-on luggage at the Dallas airport a year ago. Prosecutors contended he was testing security for a possible terrorist attack.

MIDWINTER At the current rate of global warming, Greenland is doomed to disappear into the North Atlantic. U.K. British scientists reported. Runaway melting of its huge ice cap could start within 50 years. The entire island might lose 1,600 ft in the next

HEALTH | SCIENCE

THOUGHT MACHINE Boston-area Cyberonics Inc. was given permission to explore tiny computer circuits in the brains of five severely paralyzed patients. The idea is to read the brain's vicarious commands to certain movements, such as moving a mouse, and transmit that intention to a computer.

CANCER At current rates, cancer will overtake heart disease by 2030 as the leading cause of death in Canada, the Canadian Cancer Society reported. Cancer costs the health system \$2.4 billion annually, equivalent to the economy at \$14 billion if productivity loss is taken into account.

CANADA

680 FUB The B.C. government invoked emergency measures and is looking for creative solutions such as convert farms instead of eating chicken—go large dumps—to dispose of as many as 340,000 diseased chickens and other fowl stricken by a fast-spreading bird virus. An estimated 15 million ducks in the Fraser Valley will be destroyed to try to contain the virus. None of these are healthy and will enter the normal food supply.

DEFENSE Paul Martin made a rare prime ministerial visit to a military base in New Brunswick to introduce three new support ships for the navy, said cost \$2.1 billion.

BY MARCEL BIR



THE CULL

With the whole world watching, an estimated 50,000 culls, mostly in wilderness areas, took to the air, a which was Canada's largest and best in almost 50 years. Only this season after a long winter, the snow culls in the last 50 years were stopped after 31 hours when officials determined that culls had worked 80 percent of the time. It took small birds to kill a cat.

and 600 fresh troops and air force personnel to maintain a Canadian presence in Afghanistan after the 1,900 strong main contingent pulls out in August.

The University of Toronto will receive its venerable conflict studies school the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies with the blessing of the late

prime minister's two sons. UofT hopes the Trudeau name will help it raise \$4.3 million for scholars and visiting residences.

MEAN SISTER A homeless woman between 38 and 44 was 18 times more likely to die than women in the population at large, mostly because of drugs, disease or suicide, a study in the Canadian Medical Association Journal reported. While the rate was similar to that for homeless men, in the general population women of that age are less likely to die than men.

MEDIA Toronto's fiery CHUM had become the country's third largest privately held broadcaster by buying out Western-based Crag Media Inc. for \$265 million. If approved, the deal would add Crag's four western stations to CHUM's eight independent stations from Victoria to Toronto, and may also set up CHUM as a takeover target in a period of media realignment.

JUSTICE A sign of the times: police informants in Quebec have formed an association to lobby for better protection and other guarantees. Its spokesmen were a male while he outlined the group's demands.

Mansbridge on the Record



HOW TO RUN THE CBC

In 1956, Maclean's asked that question. Some of the answers may surprise you.

HAVE YOU EVER wondered about the difference between a free market and an antique store? We presume the quality of what's found is one a headliner the editor. For the most part, that's true—but it's remarkable how many similar articles are found in both. Which raises this question: how many of those Queen Elizabeth II commemorative plates were actually made in 1952? Based on the thousands I've seen over the years, Canada must have covered the world market. And there are all those early Quebec poet, exhibitors, tables and blacked boxes. I never realized so many people lived in "early" Quebec—or that their homes were so well furnished, in case an endless supply of their house hold belongings keeps turning up at dealers all over the country.

I've read and bought letters, and some times find myself in mid-free market saying, "First, what are you doing here?" Then I find something intriguing, and spend 10 minutes gazing at it before realizing I don't need it. But there are occasions when I can't resist, and after a bit of haggling I figure out the routine I make a deal. Like a few weeks ago, when I picked up, for \$3.50 (original cover price: 15 cents) the April 14, 1956, edition of Maclean's. What made me buy it?

The editor, Ralph Allen, and managing editor, Pierre Besson, had highlighted one story on the cover, and it looked interesting: "Thirteen top TV men tell how I'd run the CBC."

These days, so much of what you read about what should be done at the CBC—especially in newspaper—by certain gossip writers and editors

who failed to get employment at the CBC. There's too much business to take them seriously. But this was different, and I couldn't wait to start reading. When I did, there was no disappointment. Maclean's asked some of the brightest, most successful people in the Canadian arts and entertainment more than what CBC television should be doing. A few of their answers:

"I'd rather use a heavy original idea than an untested good one. I think that's a big problem in Canada: we're all looking to the States and saying, 'My God, they're doing a wonderful job; why can't we make that?'" —comedian Johnny Winters.

"But the main question goes to light entertainment: some thought to concentrate educational"—playwright Lester Kinsdale.

"Without all commercial atmosphere and let the CBC devote itself to improving people's thinking"—former broadcaster Ray Ward DeLeon.

"After you do a show which you think will appeal only to lighteners, you're amazed at the reaction you get. The audience are amazingly perceptive"—screenwriter Robert.

"Size of audience is not the most important thing. The best newspaper in England, the Times, has the smallest circulation"—quiz show producer J.B. McGuire.

"It's responsible for any corporation such as the CBC to work (or go) on... (no Parliament for an annual grant. It is the very first thing that must be solved if the CBC is to tackle any other problem)" —actor/producer Mavor Moore.

Canadian television was barely four years old then. Forty-eight years later, despite the many accomplishments of television, public and private, so many of those concerns are still expressed, and so many of those dreams have yet to be realized. I think I'd use this little treasure up the first time.

For more information on the CBC, contact the CBC Information Service at 1-800-363-7700. The National Archives and Records Service is also a good source of information.

Passages

DIED Norman Campbell, the CBC broadcasting pioneer who wrote the music for *Anne of Green Gables*, the country's most enduring stage show, died in Toronto of complications from a massive stroke. He was 88. It is a matter that spanned TV's golden years, he brought Stratford shows to the small screen, directed episodes of *All in the Family* and *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* on the U.S., and landed his modest soul owner to comedian Don Harron for his bungling character Charlie Cunningham.

DONATED Krieger and Eva Pindoff, the husband-and-wife team who immigrated to Canada from post-war Germany and founded the now 98 store Music World empire from the back of a station wagon, are giving \$20 million to the Canadian arm of War



Child, the charity that helps children in war-torn countries. It is run by an other husband and wife team: Dr. Eric Hoffer and Samanthia Neri, who often wear for Maclean's.

CHANGED Moren Khawaja, the 24-year-old Ottawa computer specialist arrested last month under Canada's new anti-terrorism law, was named in a London report as a co-conspirator in a terror plot involving at least five British men and huge amounts of explosive fertilizer. It is not clear whether Britain will seek to extradite Khawaja or allow him to be tried in Canada.

U.S. rap duo Lil' Kim, 28, one of the voices behind the hit *Lady Marmalade* remake, was charged with lying to a grand jury about a relationship between her on-stage and rivals Caprice N'Noungba in front of a Manhattan hip-hop radio station three years ago. She pleaded not guilty.

DIED Micheline Charest, a marathon-running executive, died of a suspected heart attack, at 51, while undergoing plastic surgery (page 40). Charest and husband Ron Weinberg had built the Montreal-based amusement empire Clear Corp., but had been fighting allegations of a financial crisis and tax fraud that have dogged the company for years.

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The author at the Alkutubi festival in the southern holy city of Kutuba



ORDEAL BY

Maclean's Contributing Editor Adrian R. Kline returned to Iraq on April 22 after last departing from that troubled country in August 2003. He found a nation on the cusp of the uprising by both Sunnis and Shia Muslims against the U.S.-led coalition invasion. Abduction of foreigners are also increasing, and last week insurgents awarded one of their hostages Fulvio Quattrocchi of Italy. It was fate not abroad, thankfully, by Syrian-born Paul Fofel, a Canadian citizen working for the International Rescue Committee who was abducted on April 8 but released at week's end. Kline and photographer Kate Laitner experienced the dangers facing outsiders when they found themselves in the middle of a firefight between a Sunni militia and coalition forces, and were then held and questioned for three hours by the insurgents. Kline filed this special report.

THE LAST TIME I was in Iraq, it was clear when the U.S.-led occupation of the country was heading. The situation was deteriorating, unrelenting with the persistent heat of hatred and contempt, fuelled by an occupying force out of touch with the

local population and fanned by an explosion of pent-up energies previously suppressed by Saddam Hussein's oppressive regime. But the events of the past few weeks have taken even the most ardent supporters of the war by surprise. Iraq isn't boiling,

as both Shia and Sunni Muslims rise up.

To me, danger is most evident on the desolate stretches of Iraq's highways. You play the odds whenever you set out on the arid roads. The surreal scenes of arm-banded convoys line the roadways, ghettos of black smoke from burning vehicles are becoming a permanent feature on the horizon. Coalition forces are struggling to control the violence, but on any given day there is the possibility of a bomb, a stray bullet or, most frighteningly for foreigners, a target of attack, murder or kidnapping. With thousands of kilometres of road crisscrossing the barren landscape, the odds are still slim that a traveller will be hit. But playing the odds can catch up to you.



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FIRE

ADNAN R. KHAN goes to Iraq—and lands in the middle of a pitched battle

It happened on one hot week, on the road from the southern holy city of Karbala to Baghdad. Accompanied by my good friend, photographer Kris Lechner, I had attended the Kisa Holy Festival. Afterward, commencing the transportation of one of the most revered saints to this place, Imam Hussein. Despite the flood of pilgrims and the awe-inspiring or other Shia rites, Arabian unfolded largely without incident, and we left Karbala somewhat perplexed. But violence found us at 3 p.m., 30 km south of Baghdad at the roadside town of Laila.

Coming around a bend on the highway, we drove onto an ambush. On the road was a burning transport truck carrying two American M-103 armored personnel vehicles. On

the shoulder to the left of the wreckage was the body of the Iraqi driver. Can ahead of us arrived into Laila, a town over many of miles of forces. We followed—Kris and I got out with our cameras while our driver, Ali, drove the car safely. The truck continued to burn, 100 m away, as did two fuel containers in the local gas station that had also been hit. The scene was disgusting, but as a few locals curiously converged on the wreckage for a look. From our position, it was impossible to take a good photograph, so I made my way to what appeared to be abandoned houses in a barren field, thinking

that might offer a better vantage point.

The machine gun burst started as it was fired against one corner of the building, scorching us as the transport driver's body, with the burning wreckage as a dramatic backdrop. I realized that insurgents were firing at coalition forces from inside the house I had assumed to be empty. I tried to retreat, but managed only a few steps before a fighter appeared, waving his AK-47 in my face and screaming in Arabic. I need my arms and pleaded for my life. "Fakasta jannat," he yelled, using the five words of Arabic I knew and relying on my non-weapon-bearing for a reprieve. "No photo, no photo." I felt certain that in those crucial few seconds, it was my brown skin that saved me.

the rooms' space of kidnapping and attacks have targeted primarily westerners. But whatever the reason for the insurgents' interests, the fact remained that I was a nice trap on the street of what was quickly escalating into an all-out battle. Shots sounded from the other side of town, and they seemed to be getting closer. Minus my camera, which the insurgents confiscated, I made my way back to Rita and the gathering crowd of townspeople. On the road, some one was pulling the dead bag off the gravel shoulder into a ditch. But more armed fighters appeared on Lutfey's narrow streets, some of them heading toward us. Our ordeal was not over.

THERE'S A DIFFERENCE between the Sunni and Shia uprisings in Iraq. Shias have only recently resorted to violence, and haven't resorted to kidnappings. In Karbala, one commander of the Mahdi, the adolescent militia led by cleric Muhammad al-Mutawi al-Sadr, told me: "We are warriors and we will fight to the death if we have to, but we respect the rules of war." (Oddly, the 40-year-old commander, who refused to give his name, had bandaged himself and his small hand of child fighters' amide a rescue just outside Karbala's city centre in clear violation of those rules.)

For Shia fighters, the uprising is largely a religious one. "It is in our hearts to fight," one 39-year-old Mahdi member told me, who often promised they would die fighting before giving up to infiltrate. And there appears to be some measure of discipline and control in the Shia uprising, as evidenced by the lack of violence at the Arabian Inn in Karbala.

The Sunni insurgency, on the other hand, has never really been a religious war. Tribal, and often xenophobic, Sunni fight to expand territory. The rash of kidnappings and detentions of foreign journalists in various places outside the Sunni-dominated areas of central Iraq, and the killing and mutilation of four American security personnel at Fallujah on March 31 showed just how malignant Sunnis' hatred of foreigners is—and especially of Americans.

The grassroots of popular support for those doing the actual fighting comes in



A member of the Shia Mahdi militia poses with his rifle in a workshop in Karbala.

part from loyalty to place and tribe. Now, previously unbound of Sunni

loyalties are popping up almost everywhere, each independent of the other and each with its own tactics. Often, they exist along tribal lines, and only within individual tribes is there some semblance of command and control structures. Civilian war plans have thus failed to understand this culture, but during the violence in Lutfey, Rita and I got a first-hand look at how the tribal structure works.

As the fighting intensified, the townspeople gathering around us seemed divided about our predicament: "Camera, no problem," said one man, indicating with gestures that he would personally remove my gear. Women rushed out of homes, offering us water and condescence. Another man descended, gruffly but firmly, that we prove our stated intentions. Passersby were panned around—I have dual citizenship and a Palestinian passport as well—while another in the fighting escalated.

Eventually, the intensity of the battle forced

the crowd to scatter. As people slammed their gates shut, Rita and I scrambled for cover behind a parked truck. We made a dash for an open gate but the family refused us entry. Another man shouted and waved us into his home. There, with war raging outside, he and his family calmly sat us down in the living room and brought more refreshments. Curious children peered into the room before dashing off to another part of the house. It was like holiday tea, but with automatic gunfire in lieu of Tishkadevi. At the sound of a fresh burst of fire, Rita and I immediately hid the floor, only to see the family still calmly sitting on cushions, watching us with bemusement. "Don't worry," said one of the men in broken English, "you are safe here with us."

After a half hour of intense fighting, the battle waned. A young man came to tell us that Ali, our driver, had come for us. We went out, Ali had my camera, but he was closely followed by the same insurgent who had earlier waved his AK-47 in my face. And the men didn't look any calmer.

A shooting match between the insurgent and the house's patriarch opened into physical confrontation. Children started screaming, women pointed at us, saying, "Sunnis, Sunnis." The men knew we were the fact that we had both photographed the attack. He accused us of working for the Americans and of compromising the insurgents' identities. The commotion attracted other fighters, who came into the courtyard and began

screening us in. One did his forefinger across his throat: "Give them your film, Ali, please." "Give them your film or they will kill you." Handing over digital cameras instantly resolved us enough that technology had not arrived in this village, and the insurgents expected to see rolls of film, not video and storage devices.

They sent our cameras and tried unsuccessfully to open the back, then left with the equipment. But the man who had initially accused me remained behind, unconcerned of our innocence and unwilling to release us without further assurance. For another half-hour he argued with Ali, and then brought out a Koran, which Ali kissed and touched to his forehead. A sacred vow had been made. Ali, who is also Sunni, had renounced his own life to save ours. The insurgents kissed him on the cheek and left.

When we got back to our car we found other insurgents surrounding it. They had pried open the trunk, forced down one of the windows, and searched our belongings on the ground. One of the men approached us with our Canadian passports and my notebooks. "You are journalists?" he asked in passable English. We both nodded and showed him our credentials. "Where are your cameras?" We explained that they had been taken, along with my Palestinian passport. "I apologise for all of this trouble," he said in a softer tone. He was related to the tribal chief of the village, and I apologised for bringing so much trouble to his community. He turned so he would have our cameras returned. "We are not thieves," he said, before suggesting one of the villagers to escort us out of town.

A few days later, back in the relative safety of our heavily fortified hotel in Baghdad, Ali dropped by with some of Rita's camera gear. The insurgents wanted \$500 for it, he explained. He also had a message from them: if the village was attacked within the next week, we would be killed. "I will return to Lutfey in a few days with some other tribal elders to negotiate the rest of your equipment," he said. "You will have your cameras back." It would be dangerous, and we postponed, but Ali insisted. "I'll honour my word."

Meanwhile, Rita and I aren't taking any chances. We intend to spend the week in a safe house far from the malfunctioning wireless in and around Baghdad. More than anything else, it's the unpredictability that frightens us in the chaos that is Iraq, even the slimmest of odds can be too risky. ☐

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NEW GUY, OLD PRO

The PM's putting out a lot of messages as he tries to put scandal behind him

BY ANY NORMAL POLITICAL CALCULATION, a spring election should by now be a remote, nearly impossible idea. But since the Liberal government's ascent after the sponsorship scandal broke in February, and here it stands that way. One veteran Liberal MP tells me privately about the likelihood that they'll "take a beating" if the Prime Minister sends them out in the campaign trail in May and June. And there's plenty to keep the controversy from fading in the days ahead, starting this week when Chuck Gault, the elusive bureaucrat who headed the now notorious sponsorship program, finally testifies before the House committee looking into the affair. Not far from having the issue beaten

on election speculation, Martin loyalists have been running up the value—and the Prime Minister's incessant campaign-style touring provides powerful evidence that he's keeping the option of a June rendezvous with voters very open.

Editorial As his April 16 speech to Toronto's Canadian and Empire clubs. Far from serving up the usual laudatory boilerplate, Martin delivered his closest echo to date that he might actually mean something by his favorite catchphrase—"transformation or change." His list of five top priorities—health, learning, Aboriginals, cities and towns, and Canada's role in the world—was hardly surprising. He has frequently mused, usually too vaguely, about one centimeter on these issues. What was fresh was the way he sharpened his focus, moving from incoherent expressions of concern to more precise goals. On health, it was reducing waiting times. On Aboriginals, it was making amends from reserves to Native cities. Martin sounded as though he was not driving potential themes for what's shaping up to be a brief of a campaign, whatever it comes.

Senior aides to the Prime Minister are cogitating about their deliberations on whether to hold a spring election or wait until fall. But the way they talk about Martin's recent performance suggests they remain ready to go soon, with June 21 as the most discussed date. Given that that would be foolhardy. Thus, point to a fact that even though Martin has spent much of the past two months stamping the country and announcing a variety of spending, poll results are stuck at mi-

nority government levels—just 35 per cent support according to the latest Ipsos-Reid survey. But close to Martin, the view is that he has laid the groundwork that would let him ratchet up support during a campaign. "Canadians are still angry at the government about the sponsorship issue and are expressing that anger in polls," said one top official in the Prime Minister's Office. "But at some point an electoral course, they'll be asking themselves, 'Who's been to keep our voices to a country again?'"

The theory is that mail-in voters might be

THOSE pushing for an early election say Canadians will still pick Martin over Stephen Harper to run the country

about the waste and fraud of the sponsor ship affair, they'll still pick Martin over Stephen Harper to actually run the country. That means reminding them about the politicians they give to trust as Jean Charest's final minutes grow. But there's a catch: while Martin is eager to go down to his constituents under Ontario, he's also trying to show continuity between the old and new regimes. In his Toronto speech, he soundly hit the government's steps to reform Parliament. "even though we have been in office only a short time." But minutes after that bid to position himself as just getting started, he was reminding about the deficit fight that made him reputation. That co-

consistency goes unchallenged in front of a lunch crowd, leaving it both ways will be harder during a televised debate in the heat of a campaign.

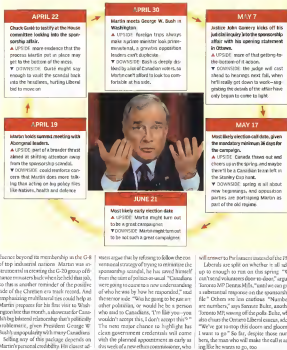
Finding a balance between easing him self as the new guy and the old pro is one tactical challenge. Getting voters to look past the scandal to low-gripping policy issues is another. Liberal strategists see health as the file most likely to catch voters' attention. Martin suggested that he'll be demanding more from the provinces in the coming round of bargaining, offering additional federal money only in return for guarantees that waiting times will be shortened. Health Minister Pierre Pettigrew is reportedly working on what one aide called "a bill for agreement" of the medicare system, which has landed from one thrust and crunch to another. The problem, as always for federal politicians, is that the provinces actually run the hospitals. As a result, Ottawa generally ends up talking about broad principles rather than precise services. "Any discussion of health care runs the risk of demotivating one generation," Martin said. "Heardly turning whatever gets happened. Pettigrew comes up with data an election winner will depend entirely on avoiding that trap."

If health is the most acute public concern on Martin's to-do list, Aboriginal policy will be the least top-of-mind worry. His strategists admit tackling Native issues is not a potent vote winner still, they point to Martin's summer with Aboriginal leaders: this week to evidence that he is seeing on what he thinks matters, not just on what makes pre-election noise. Education is closer to the heart of many voters. Here, Martin suggested a new aim—boosting the number of Canadians earning post-secondary degrees, currently much lower than U.S. levels of B.A.s and Ph.D.s.

On foreign policy, his signature proposal is stabilizing leaders' club of second-order executives, a G-30 to broaden Canada's in-

STEPPING STONES TOWARD AN ELECTION?

A number of crucial events in the days ahead may help the Liberals get enough momentum to finally make the call



SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

Jean Charest has had a steep learning curve as premier, says BENOÎT AURAIN

JEAN CHAREST was power in Quebec City last year ago on April 14, a 40-year-old young leader heralding a new era of two-conference change. But he is a much different story today: a humbled and seriously discredited premier. His first year in office was marked by incompetence, blunders, controversy, protests and intense voter dissatisfaction. With four more years ahead of him, and, luckily, a firm Quebecois opposition in dissent despite unfavourable polls, Charest has chosen a radical option: starting over. In March he rolled a budget with social-democratic leanings, and announced an anti-poverty policy that drew reluctant leaders from the left and pushed his neo-cons supporters. Charest also ejected a page out of the PQ book and invited the public to "consultation forums" across the province.

After six long years of tearing the boomer and enduring position from the previous PQ government, Charest thought he was done mopping—born former federal Tory deputy prime minister came to a homegrown Liberal leader at Quebec. "We're ready," was his slogan—but he wasn't. "There is no pre-school to groom you for the surprises that await you in government," he told Macklin in a recent interview. "Work takes a different meaning when they are spoken from the premier's chair. The impact is not the same. Sometimes, you make decisions that trigger consequences that were totally unexpected. That's part of the learning curve."

It's been a sharp one, for him and his mostly rookie cabinet. According to the polls, if an election were held now Charest's Liberals would be back in opposition, having lost a full 10 percent of their support since the election. "Charest has totally melted

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his opportunity of making a reasonable line impression on voters," says Jean-Jacques Bédard, a respected communications expert in Montreal. "Quebecers want a better leader, someone who is above the fray. Many will perceive him as a member of the opposition."

Charest is learning the hard way, the art of survival in Quebec politics as exemplified by René Lévesque and Robert Bourassa before him. Quebec voters are one stubborn flock, and the only way to succeed is to lead them exactly where they want to go. It's not how Charest initially approached his new job. "I am an investor," he says. "I am here because I want to do things, change things." So he hit the deck running, pushing an alienated and conservative agenda, promising to "re-

figure it" the way the government operates. Leaving no sacred cow untouched, the new premier said the time of state intervention in the province's troubled economy was over. The province's failed Quiet Revolution of the '60s was over. The approach alienated Quebec's powerful public sector unions on the one hand, the Charest plodders, taking hydro and daycare fees, cooking up laws to reform the labour code and open the door to outsourcing, while saying voters had given him "a clear mandate for change."

As it turned out, they just had been fed up with nine turbulent years of the PQ. Charest's strategy backfired: his obnoxious turned his opponents into de facto reformers—and his supporters into apocalyptic dupes. That's about when a brutal poll landed "Charest hipster his mandate," a headline blared in January in *Le Devoir*, according to Lester Macklin, more than 60 per cent of voters thought Charest had no mandate to run the province the way he was. "He lost the vote as an active endorsement while, in fact, what voters did was dump the PQ out of office," says pollster Jean Marc Lévesque. "Charest was giving them more than they had bargained for, and they told us in the poll."

Charest made himself scarce for several

weeks. "They took him to the garage for a complete overhaul," joked one various reporter covering the National Assembly. The most important thing in government during the Liberals' first year was the premier himself. The new anti-premier Jean Charest, who surfaced last month, signified, understanding, self-speaker, all series. Above all, he has backed down his message to non-negotiable words. "The cost of running the government is many times that the revenues, and we cannot take them. So how should we go about it?" he now asks. Since agenda, but a new approach. "I have never had any doubt that the changes we are putting forward would anger a sensitive sector, and that's why we moved slowly but early on in the mandate," Charest says. "But obviously, the social unrest that followed has shaken every

CHAREST'S

previous experience was in federal politics—but at the provincial level it is a different ball game

people, even among those who agreed with us that change is necessary."

No matter how "ready" Charest thought he was, the facts remain that in previous experience was federal politics—a different ball game. "This ball has been back much faster at the provincial level, because we are closer to the people," he says. "And things are different in Quebec because governments are also about identity. Here, it is possible for opponents of specific policy to wrap themselves in the flag and call you a traitor. Things can go very personal here. I had to learn that, too."

So, the field is set for the second inning—and national public sector unions follow the will. The players are the same, but the strategy is different. While Charest is mired by drifting left, union leaders such as Henri Massé of the Fédération des travailleurs du Québec are pushing on a suit and tie, no-nonsense interviews and speeches that reassure are concerned with the budget, the deficit, the fiscal rating of the province. "I am not the conservative in this, I am not the one looking to preserve the status quo—the unions are," Charest says. The next part of the game will be between the social-liberal in government, and the conservative left, perhaps on the picket lines. Only in Quebec. □



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THE DEATH WATCH

Should unloved and perennially broke Air Canada be put out of its misery?

IT MAY be just a matter of time. Air Canada, the country's flagging airline, has been protected from its creditors for more than a year by order of the Ontario Superior Court. An exclusive, five-month-long courtship with billionaire Victor Leitesh has consumed industry will be dropped altogether. Other potential suitors appear reluctant to step into the breach. In 2003, the carrier lost almost \$2 billion. "The year before, it lost nearly another billion. How close to going bankrupt is Canada's dominant airline?" As the restructuring drama drags on, observers have changed their tune. Instead of cheering how the airline might recover from the mess it's in, they're now speculating about what will push it under. "This named breach on Air Canada," says Douglas Reed, a professor of strategy at Queen's School of Business who focuses on the aviation industry. "My instinct today is, it's going to be difficult for them to turn around what has been a deteriorating situation." Reed's reasoning: Air Canada's plan to slash

WHO CRIES, WHO CHEERS

If Air Canada goes bust, there will be a lot more losers than winners.

LOSERS

Air Canada employees: around 30,000 worldwide (down from 40,000 in 2002)
Travelers: especially business people seeking frequent flights to many destinations
Paul Martin: politician known famous for

rescuing a economy would see a large employer and country's flagging carrier vanish on his watch
Most Canadians: faced with fewer than 750,000 people likely to see service cut or reduced
Greater Toronto Airports Authority: would lose its

biggest customer just as it's poured \$2.4 billion into a grid of new Toronto taxi food services, would lose its top client
Air Canada debt holders: unsecured creditors, mostly banks, are owed \$2.7 billion, which will be up for grabs
Aeroplan members: what happens to all those points you've been collecting?

WINNERS

Rivals, airlines and Visa: Balf particularly in the Wind up-Quebec City corridor
Short-haul carriers: like the daily WestJet, Air Canada's blood enemy
U.S. carriers: particularly American and United, which already fly to Canada and may be permitted to expand here

as expenses has risen up short—by a significant \$100 million—despite heavy layoffs and reengineered airplane leases. WestJet Airlines Ltd., the Calgary-based upstart that costs much less to operate than Air Canada,

continues to nab its own customers. And if someone finds a way to offer cheap long-distance flights using a low-cost model like the one WestJet and others employ on short-haul trips, Air Canada's far more profitable

overseas flights would be seriously endangered. "I believe Air Canada will be broken bankruptcy protection within two years," Reed says. "By that point, it will be all over."

Ultimately, what will decide the carrier's party's fate is whether it survives out to sea with more than an ongoing emergency or one-based emergency—well, of course, only if it has the know-how to stay afloat. Air Canada's books. But even that this group flows many unknowns. Will a deep pocketed partner be found, and if so, how much right is party up? Will employees agree to further cost-cutting in order to make the company viable? What will happen in the troubled airline industry as a whole?

"Every time I go to a cocktail party, people ask me, 'Should I buy a plane ticket?'" What do I do about my Aeroplan points?" says Richard McLean, a University of Western Ontario professor of law specializing in bankruptcy matters. "People don't want to be involved in their holiday." That kind of chaos has been around as far as the airline is concerned from its creditors. But if the current restructuring effort fails, those creditors will get the chance to auction off money they can from the carrier's assets. Air Canada isn't there yet, McLean says. "But we're right on the edge."

Still, customers may not be willing to wait for the company to get its act together. As the credit crunch continues, Canadians are already asking whether their summer vacations are in jeopardy. If that scare spreads to business travelers—the airline's bread and butter—and they decide to look elsewhere for Air Canada, it won't matter what consumers employees make or how much new money is injected into the company, McLean says. "Should it be liquidated? We're getting pretty close to where there's no answer is yes."

Questions about the fate of the Aeroplan frequent flyer program are front of mind not only for Air Canada's customers but also its partners. Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, whose Aeroplan Visa is one of the most widely held credit cards in Canada, is considering a takeover without the pep alert plan that lets its cardholders amass points toward other purchases. "When asked during a conference call with analysts what would happen if the airline were to fail, CIBC chief executive John Florkin tried to be reassuring. "If there day for some reason there was no longer an Aeroplan program,"

WILL AIR CANADA CRASH AND BURN?

Yes. "It's going to be difficult for them to turn around what has been a deteriorating situation. I believe Air Canada will be back in liquidation pretty fast within two years," says Douglas Reed, strategy professor, Queen's School of Business.

Maybe. "If Air Canada is going to be able to stay afloat, they are going to have to reduce labour costs more than what has already been agreed to by the union—and that's over and above the pension issue." —Carolee Donohue, equity analyst, Desjardins, Montreal-based bank

No. "This isn't a business, guys, but even I could make money with it. You've got 60 per cent of the domestic market, 90 per cent of the international market. It seems to me there's a pretty good business model here." —Scott Armstrong, an analyst, Canadian Auto Workers



he said, "I'd be out job to make sure we can provide an offer that would continue to hold those clients." He didn't elaborate.

Canadians can find some comfort in the fact that Aeroplan is a separate entity that would likely be sold if Air Canada were bust. It could be run by another player and make new alliances with other airlines. But no one can predict how such deals would affect people building all those points.

Likewise, the airline's aircraft maintenance unit and fleet, its regional feeder service, would both probably be put on the block. Even though Air Canada has few other hard assets—most of its planes are leased—the process of divvying up the

"EVERY time I go to a party, people ask, 'Should I buy a plane ticket? What do I do about my Aeroplan points?'"

company would be complex and costly. Canadian carriers would have to pay out such things as covered departure time slots at O'Hare, Heathrow and other major airports.

Worst-case, meanwhile, would scramble to capture as much of the Canadian traffic as possible. But at only a fraction of the cost—Air Canada has more than the number of employees and seven times as many planes—Worlitz could not grow fast enough to fill the yawning gap. The federal government might be inclined to finally allow U.S. carriers to expand into the Canadian market. It's also possible that a renewal of Air Canada could be kept alive and regain the status—just as Swiss International Air Lines two years ago from the ruins of Swissair Group.

Will that happen? The next suggestion of an Air Canada bankruptcy raises that bar. It's not a business, guys, but even I could make money with it. You've got 60 per cent of the domestic market, 90 per cent of the international market. You just got a billion dollars in revenues from the union and over a billion in revenues from its suppliers and people who lease the planes. The creditors are going to get a hell of a lot more than that and you've just spent a billion on brand new airplanes. It seems to me there's a pretty good business model here."

Heaven knows airline members would bear the brunt of a bankruptcy's impact. They'd lose not only their memberships, they'd lose a chunk of their pensions. In fact, it's the effort to protect those pensions that pushed Vista to deny. To help fund a replacement, the government would have to inject the 25 per cent cap on foreign investment in the airline business as Air Canada can welcome money from around the world.

So far, the unlikely holder that's been the last word in the federal government: Paul Martin knows a bailout by Ottawa would not only anger taxpayers but, worse still, it would probably fail. At the same time, he will want to avoid using the national carrier go under in an election year, putting 30,000 more out of work. Opening the door to foreign investors might be too—and Air Canada's—best bet.

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A BUBBLE READY TO BURST

Escalating housing prices pose a challenge to the Bank of Canada

ON A RECENT TRIP to Vancouver, I was told that when the developer of a proposed downtown condo project put the units on site, crowds lined up around the block to buy properties that wouldn't be built for more than a year. Another person told me that the last such thing he recalls was to buy gold, just as he was getting in more than US\$800 an ounce in 1980, before beginning a planner to US\$250 an ounce nearly two decades later. There have been other bubbles since then, but he made a useful point: Frenzied frenzies are sure signs of trouble ahead for an investment class. They're also a sign of

trouble for central bankers.

When I was appointed in 2002 that the Queen would knight him, Alan Greenspan, then vice president of the Federal Reserve Board chairman, gave me membership in "The Order of the Bubble." This was a reference to Greenspan's responsibility for the tech stocks that sent Nasdaq to the moon (and to some of \$5,000) but he not delivered massive monetary stimulation for a year starting in October 1998. Nasdaq would surely never have reached even 3,800.

So Alan is named as a suggestion that his money printers led to the financial markets that collapsed in collapse and recession. When the world's leading central bank was in Jackson Hole, Wyo., in 2001 for their annual go-together, he declared his responsibility for that disaster. On this and other occasions, Greenspan not only delivered responsibility but went for (this) saying that central bankers should refrain from picking—or even identifying—bubbles.

SINCE the crash of tech stocks, many investors—in the United States and around the world—have concluded that real estate is the only surefire investment

recognition and achieve sustained growth.

(When reacting from performing these tasks, central bankers might choose walking or even as opposed to water skiing or water skiing.)

Greenspan argues that job No. 1 means fighting inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index—in other words, inflation today is day-to-day inflation. As to whether assets are inflating, that's up to the market to sort out for itself.

Obama shows that when inflation is about to become a problem, prices of commodities, led by food and fuel, rise sharply

(as they have been doing lately). And housing usually responds quickly to a whiff of inflation. Recognizing that threat, the Reserve Bank of Australia and the Bank of England have been raising interest rates in the face of housing booms. Naturally, their nations' currency values have risen, provoking screams from many exporters.

Well, Greenspan certainly doesn't have that problem: the U.S. dollar is the workhorse of all the serious currencies. It's even weak against the Swiss franc. It's not for the hundreds of billions of greenbacks bought by Asian central banks. Greenspan's currency's performance in the market would more closely resemble the Argentine peso than, say, the euro, or the Canadian dollar. Which leads to the dilemma facing Bank of Canada governor David Dodge by Greenspan's test. Dodge is not for to lowering interest rates, because Canadian inflation—as measured by the consumer index—is low, and the economy isn't overheating. Moreover, the Canadian dollar is strong—so as strong as the Australian dollar, but strong enough to cause dislocation for the autos and parts industry—and some other export industries.

However, Dodge saw what happened when Canada's last real estate bubble burst in the early 1990s. That speculation began reduced terrible damage—as the century and on horizons, particularly in Vancouver and Toronto. With the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. pouring gasoline on the fire of house inflation by letting many buy on borrow up to 100 per cent of the purchase price of their dream homes, should Dodge make their interest rates even lower by cutting rates again—as he is widely urged?

No, because the inflation risks much too serious.

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krall comes home

Her first CD to feature original tunes, co-penned with husband Elvis Costello, offers a window into her heart.

"YOU KNOW," I tell Dina Krall, "a lot of people are interested in your marriage to Elvis Costello."

The world's most famous younger jazz singer ponders this information. Slouching into the sofa, makes herself smaller. "I'm as surprised as the rest, you know?" she says at last. "I'm as surprised as the whole—I just didn't expect it. I guess that's a good thing."

What, it's a good thing that people are curious about you and Elvis?

"No—not a good thing that I don't think about it!"

We are in suite at the Four Seasons in Beverly Hills, Calif. It's whiskey afternoon outside. There's some fruit plate on the coffee table. Krall is discussing what might be the most audacious album of her career, *The Girl on the Other Side* (to be released April 27 on Verve/Universal Music Canada). Much of the surprise comes from the six tracks she co-wrote with 49-year-old Costello, the veteran of Britain's early '60s post-punk

scene whom she quietly married last December.

And as long as we keep the conversation to the musical ruins of that collaboration, everything's cool. I have been interviewing the 39-year-old singer from Norristown, Pa., at intervals for almost a decade, and her instincts have never been those of a diva or a fashion plate or a socialite. In her career, of course, she has played all those roles. But in her head she's a musician. She makes a living putting on shows. She has made a very good business of it. But if you want to ask her about show business, you won't get far.

Yes, she admits, she did appear on Vicki Carrasco's afternoon talk show with Costello in March. But she is a horribly distressed when I tell her the *Globe and Mail* ran an account of their appearance under the headline, "The Krall and Costello show?"

"Oh, I don't like that. 'The Krall and Costello show?'" This won't do. "The reason why we did it, that answer



Gaudy and neon signs captured in Tokyo

FOUND IN TRANSLATION

Despite its oddities, Japan is much more than caricatures, says STEVE BURGESS

GAUDY, THY NAME IS JAPAN.

It starts at the airport where the passenger conveyor belt only carries you along but talks to you as well, informing you in English some that the end is near and you should prepare to move your legs again. It seems self-evident, but perhaps the Japanese know what they're up to—after my Tokyo visit there was a horrible accident as the Roppongi Hills apartment complex when a six-year-old boy was crushed to death in a revolving door. The idea that machines will cartoon us

as we somehow quaintly offend Japanese. I hardly expect trouble from the unfriendly lunatics, though. This may be my

A HOSPITAL in Canada would probably be thrilled to have the staffing level of a typical Japanese gas station

favourite Japanese convenience—a little machine that sounds like the shop door on a busy day. Patrons plug their umbrellas into the device, covering them as a plastic chashu sheet is automatically deployed in a huge invisible God forbid! There should be an umbrella ladder beside the door. Not when we've got the umbrella lunatics.

Oldies crash the city here—the red dots that open automatically, the noisy or parks that swing vehicles up on Ferris wheel like

traps, the feature-parked taxis that almost require a special licence. On the streets, everybody from the security guard to the convenience man bow down the side with bows the kind of workers that Masatoshi would have used for special occasions.

Then there's the fact that any Canadian hospital would be thrilled to enjoy the staffing levels of a typical Japanese gas station. Two gas to reach the windshield, one to pump gas, one to drive you back into traffic, one or two just to stand around and make you feel important. With all those semi-useless employees, it's what liberal paragon might look like if they ever ran out of room in the States.

Such unusual touches and getting cultural all together have caused westerners to put Japan under microscope for years. Now you will see familiar elements of western culture fed through a Japanese blender, here too you may discover a Japanese way of certain matters, concerning with what looks like appalling insensitivity to others, for example the Nasa bathroom hanging in a crowded store on popular Takeshita Street. That, Japanese are used to seeing the smelly as a bathroom symbol, thus making it less interesting. But still.

The initial strange view of Japan inevitably inspires responses like Sofia Coppola's *Lost in Translation*, that many pieces of Oscar winning trips about two country Yanks in Tokyo. (One of the pleasures of this Asian occurrence was meeting Clint Doyle in Hong Kong. Doyle was the cinematographer on *Chasing Dream* or *Wong Kar-wai's* gorgeous *In the Mood for Love*, which some say Coppola borrowed heavily from. Doyle considered one a director when I mentioned *Lost in Translation*, proving himself perhaps the only person who dislikes Coppola's film more than I do. "It's a George W. Bush tourist movie," he fumed.)

Coppola did capture genuine aspects of Japanese culture, such as the host's automatic counter-offer that combines a barely missing down with a subtle suggestion you've stayed in bed too long. The scene looked great, too. But Coppola's characters were mere caricatures. If you made this same movie about America it would feature a guy saying "I was getting you" which means all day and ride with the Man all night. *Lost in Translation* is a complete lack of compassion and respect as viewed by a couple of groups who dismiss anything as American (Plus,

the only one interesting character in the whole movie. Did Coppola get an Oscar for writing *Bill Murray*?)

Still, *Lost in Translation* is indicative of the way visitors and foreign workers often view Japan. And it would be naive to dismiss all our cultural differences as irrelevant.



Non-fashions on sale in a trendy store, young people in the Shibuya district of Tokyo

Many observers have noted Japan's ingrained xenophobia, thus keeping distant of outsiders that is the legacy of island life. One letter printed in the *Daily Forward* newspaper during my visit pleaded with Japanese citizens to show foreigners as to individuals. "[A] few foreigners are committing unlawful acts. We Japanese people should not view foreigners as 'good' or 'bad'."

THE JAPANESE most reminded me of Canadians: affable and polite on the surface, but with a certain reserve

people by looking at their appearance or surroundings."

Perhaps you can't blame Japanese for their suspicions—after all, some foreigners make movies like *Lost in Translation* and others award them Oscars. And Canadians get the same xenophobic message in reverse from the likes of *Doane Francis*. But Japan may be the only society that has this sense of us—then contrasted in its very alphabet—rather, alphabets.

Japanese writing features three different sets of characters. One of them is reserved exclusively for spelling out things that are not Japanese, such as the signs of foreign-owned restaurants. Imagine the Nihil, under this system—a Toronto-Caribbean would be listed with Roman letters on one side and Greek on the other (and Caribbeians would be about as stupid as ever). Quebec language laws are nothing compared to the hell in the bone protective instincts of the Japanese.

Nonetheless, having bounced around Asia a bit (this month, I thought the Japanese most reminded me of Canadians. There is the surface affability, the polite talent to be polite, but behind it all a certain reserve that does not always give way to genuine warmth. We also share with the Japanese a common anxiety about our place in the world. "Who is the most famous Japanese person in the West?" one man asked me, reflecting a not untypical concern with Japan's foreign image, similar to the Canadian obsession with who's making it big in the States.

It may be that anxiety that makes so many Japanese appreciate small gestures from visitors. On my first run in Tokyo three years ago I was in the habit of visiting a coffee shop on the Shibuya district. The staff came to know me and greeted me with a smile every day. At the end of a week I presented them with small Canadian tokens—pins, erasable-notebook characteristics. They seemed almost overwhelmed.

On my final day in Tokyo this time around, I decided to drop by that coffee shop. A young man named Hiroshi came out of the backroom and greeted me warmly. Three years and a constant flood of customers had passed but he remembered me well, describing perfectly my gift to him. "I still have it," he said.

Sofia Coppola can have her Japan. I'm glad I have mine.

PRESTO CHANGO

Cosmetic surgery seems a breeze in makeover shows

IT WAS ARGUABLY Carrie Wilson, better known as Beach Boy Brian Wilson's daughter—and perhaps best known as “the plump one” from the early ‘90s musical *Boyz n the City*—who sparked our strange fascination with extreme makeover as entertainment. In August 1999, in a pioneering venture, Wilson showed her gothic liposuction surgery to be broadcast live on the Internet. A quarter of a million viewers logged on to watch a doctor cupped her stomach down to the size of a fig. Several months later, Wilson re-emerged on the cover of *People* magazine looking glamorous and strikingly reformed—literally, as the cover line read, “had her start.”

The latest pact of reality TV makeover shows—ABC's *Extreme Makeover*, Fox's *Secrets and Myster*ies, and MTV's *What a Famous Face*—produce the same fantastical, strange, grabbing results, although they've managed to whittle the entire process down to tidy, one-

hour segments. Typical episodes consist of two, unusually handsome doctors, often making healing montage, a new hairstyle and haircare signals of joy. These shows make cosmetic surgery look so straightforward, so oddly life-affirming, you almost wonder why more people don't have a go at it. Then reality—the kind that happens off camera—runs behind. Last week, *Makeover* Charron, co-founder of nonprofit *Heaven* (non-traditional house *Cost Corp.*), suffered cardiac arrest during an hour of surgery under general anesthesia for a face and breast lift, dying the next day. Her mother, second-hand high-profile death in recent months. In January, reality *Olivia Gold* went, author of *The First Wives Club*, died after undergoing a routine face rock.

We're suddenly reminded that a new nose isn't quite the same as a new life—this, despite different appetite for radio discussion formats on TV, these are still major sac-

red procedures carrying the same risks they always have. In March, the American Society of Plastic Surgeons put out a guest release calling this new wave of reality TV shows “a serious cause for concern” and cautioning the viewing public “to have realistic expectations about cosmetic surgery.” Dr. Robert Scubbe, a Toronto cosmetic plastic surgeon perhaps best known for penis enlargement, says now he often has to “disappoint” patients. “They think when they see it on TV and see what they don't understand, it's often.”

What's lost on the cutting-room floor are the risks—a bit of a male logic—looking at all those that occur: any general anesthesia, as well as blood clots and infections. Not to mention the healing process, which can be physically and emotionally arduous, and can last upwards of a year. “It didn't take for 13 years to be a buzzword,” says Scubbe. “Everything I do is a major surgery.”

At their core, extreme makeover shows are entertainment, but they affect us in real-world plastic surgery. As with most major structural shifts, this acceptance has been a subtle evolution. According to Robert Thompson, director of the Center for the Study of Popular Television at Syracuse University, the mass popularity of grocery products like breast injections is a revealing mirror on *Sex and the City* and other “live-in-cosmetic techniques” suggests we're moving away from decades of plastic surgery in the alternate life of vanity, making a palatable life “to a body of people who otherwise wouldn't have considered it.”

That cosmetic surgery continues to boom in North America, Canadian statistics aren't available, but the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery reported that in 2003, there were more than 18 million surgical cosmetic procedures in the U.S.—an 87 per cent increase over 1997.

Until now the makeover, that quasi-scientific North American theme, has manifested in TV shows that deliver a new wardrobe, hairstyle as family room. The body's whole new frames. (“I'm fine with reality TV shows,” says Thompson, “until they require ambulation.”) The signs of cosmetic surgery is fading, but so is any and sense of risk. “These shows give the patient a little bit of information,” says Scubbe, “but in medicine, a little knowledge is dangerous.” A little niggle, on the other hand, might not be as authoritative after all.



RECENT high-profile deaths during plastic surgery remind us that there are numerous risks involved

The healing process can be physically and emotionally arduous, and can last upwards of a year



QUENTIN'S CUTTING EDGE

The provocative director indulges his passions to the hilt in *Kill Bill: Vol. 2*

FOR BETTER OR WORSE, Quentin Tarantino is the most influential filmmaker of his generation. He's disheveled and unfocused. The former video-store clerk is the ultimate, a genre junkie who's seen far more movies than *Thelma*, although it's his job to make them and mine to watch them. He's an amateur in the original sense of the word, as with almost what's made a career of sewing jumpy fashions, and faded scarves. If he had director's word, style-happy American films could be seen as the rework of the male film need, Tarantino is in a fine place. And *Kill Bill* is his adoring homage to *Seven Samurai* and *Yojimbo* and

spaghetti westerns, room lining violence in *Yojimbo* and *Seven Samurai* of great American mad dog. Last year, during his epic at hand, he scored up *Kill Bill: Vol. 1*, a cherry blossom bloodbath with dozens of scenes of choreography and peak action from *Seven Samurai*. I'm not usually fond of violence (and was alternately repulsed and bored by *McClintock* of the *Cherry*), but I loved *Kill Bill: Vol. 1*. It's a jarring, funny and often exquisitely beautiful, with a fragile tenderness lacking beneath the cruelty. These ten episodes of the film combined in this narrative and raised the risk before dialogue that has become Tarantino's signature.

Well, *Kill Bill: Vol. 2* is an entirely different kind of movie, with more talk than action. These are no grand set pieces of fight choreography, and the bloodshed is relatively sparse. Instead, with most of the story set around El Paso, Tex., Tarantino adapts the heroic pace of a classic western, with Zen-like off-camera dialogue, while the threat of violence looms on the horizon like a thunder cloud over the desert. Which is not to say there aren't some very violent scenes. Tarantino's a hard-core director, and his *Cherry* is his hero, the *Brute* (Chris Thurman), a brutal live-in “a Texas farm.” And one of her most delicate acts of vengeance involves squeezing an adversary's gauged nut against her own.

But most of the movie unfolds as a character portrait devoted to forlorn, not lightning—and to filling out the back story behind *McClintock*. The narrative is framed by a gorgeous black-and-white scene straight from *Yojimbo*, of the *Brute* before the wheel of fate, telling us she's “killed a billion for people to get to this point” and will now kill

Bill. For the uninitiated, *Bill* (David Carradine) is a kind of arch-gangster with a couple of female henchmen and a deadly smile. A literary flashback shows the couple to the wedding chapel massacre that put the *Brute* in a coma in Vol. 1. *Bill* enacts the wedding rehearsal, a broken playing a broken face who's not about to forgive the *Brute* (pregnant with his child) for trying to vanquish a normal life with another man. As Tarantino's sidekick script enriches toward the final showdown with *Bill*, the *Brute* comes back as a traitor stab brother, Budd (Michael Madsen), and her vicious rival from *Bill*'s assassin team, Elle Driver (Daryl Hannah). In a comic flashback, we also see her team-mate and ally from a mean Chinese master (Gordon Liu).



Although Thurman acts her heart out, the movie is really a valentine to *Yojimbo*

BACK TO THE 'FUN PART'

Doug Gibson seems content with a reduced M&S role

LAST WEEK the continuing turmoil in Canadian book publishing bubbled to the surface again. Industry icon McClelland & Stewart, whose current authors and backlist form a virtual canon of Canada, announced that Doug Gibson, its long-time publisher and, since 2006, president, would leave that position on May 31. Gibson, 60, one of the country's most prominent and successful editors/publishers, will remain at the helm of the M&S imprint he founded in 1986, Douglas Gibson Books. His replacement will be Canadian Doug Pepper, 42, currently a New York City-based vice-president at Crown Publishing, a Random House subsidiary. Gibson spoke with *Maclean's* Senior Writer Brian Ketter about his career and future plans.

M&S and its peculiar ownership structure—a quarter owned by Random House, which also controls sales, marketing and distribution—has been described as “an ongoing experiment.” How is it working?

The new M&S has been the subject of much speculation, centered around how can we truly be independent with 25 per cent of the company vested in what it's fair to call a rival company. But we have stayed separate by carefully maintaining our editorial independence, the decision over which books to publish is the crucial independence. And the University of Toronto, which owns the other 75 per cent, and Random House have respected the original 2000 arrangement from 2005 to 2006. That common was part of this shuffle, giving the new regime a fair crack. But this isn't a hostile takeover—I'm still around.

Why now?

The board of directors decided it was the time. I absolutely accept that decision with a huge amount of grace. I suppose they were hoping for more spectacular financial results last year. I always had it in my mind to go back to Douglas Gibson Books—it's publishing wanted down to just the fun part.



The imprint was the first “pennant” one in Canada. How did it come about?

When Abe Bennett bought M&S in 1986, he used this new idea—the choice to put my personal stamp on accepted books—to become over 200 Macmillan. I edited five to 10 books a year until 1988, when Abe, after

a full week of persuasion, named me into a publisher. That cut me back to two or three a year—weekend and evening work—and aiding me at it as publisher four years ago just made it worse. A major consolation for me now is not having to worry about improper returns from Indigo.

The regular returns have been a huge problem for publishers. What do you mean by “improper”?

Indigo promised the federal Competition Bureau that it would not return more than 30 per cent of the books it ordered, but in 2003 they put these out into the window. In many cases returns were over 30 per cent, a major ongoing headache for every publisher in Canada.

Will any of M&S's current writers move over to GDB?

Well, one or two fiction writers I've edited for M&S—like Alastair MacLeod—will, but that's not the way I want it to work. I'm hoping to retain the ones I have now and gain new, non-M&S ones. Since fiction here is brilliantly handled by Miles Seligman, and I'm ridiculously wide-ranging in my interests, the new authors will probably continue to be non-fiction. But it's certainly going to be better—the fall has new names from Alice Munro and Jack Hodgins, a Christmas story from Alastair, and memoirs from Peter C. Newman and Sheila Capps.

Alastair MacLeod is certainly an important writer for you, personally and professionally. His *No Great American Novel* is one of the most acclaimed Canadian novels of all time. It's also said you “extracted” him from him?

Alastair had been frantically at work on it for years, reading everyone across the country, working people. While plucking of MacLeod switched then to keep track of

how it was going—did he keep reading the same excerpt or was there evidence he had written some more? Early in 1999 he made the mistake of saying to me he was nearly done, so I said, “How about this fall?” And he said, “OK.” Of course, Alastair wasn't flush in this fall, I meant publish it. That spring I phoned him on a Wednesday and said I was coming by for the manuscript that Friday, and then I just didn't answer the phone for two days. On Friday, I arrived at his Windsor home. Alastair greeted me rather coolly, but the bottle of Talisker I slowly brought me warmly.

Eventually, I showed him the contract, and the headache he'd been complaining about, and asked if he had anything for me. Alastair got up and came back with an *armful* of manuscript, about 70 per cent of the book. Later he showed me in office, which had these amazing piles of yellowed paper covered in his handwriting. Through the summer packages of 10 to 12 yellow pages came every week.

But seems like an important criterion.

I still delight in every part of the book-making business, from dealing with writers to designing cover art. All the highlights of my publishing career have been working with talented people. That doesn't always mean writers, but when you go through the list of M&S authors you can see how amazingly lucky I've been. It's the books that matter in the end, not the bookkeeping. ■

BOTTOM LINE ON BOOKS

M&S's new head comes with a fiscal mission

THE SKY CONTINUES to fall on Canadian publishing after years of consolidation in a tough retail market. Last year, returns of

around books to publishers from Indigo, the giant chain that moves well over half of the books sold in Canada, rose at more than 50 per cent. Maclelland & Stewart, supposedly the victim of declining interest in non-fiction, then became not selling at home or abroad (like used to author, my worry publishers, who complain—on though they had no regret in the phenomenon—that too many books are being published. And now McClelland & Stewart publisher Doug Gibson has been eased from his position by a bottom-line focused board of directors. Things are awful, with no relief in sight.

Or maybe not. It's hard to tell in a close-knit, secretive trade where insiders go off the record just to say “no comment.” Doug Pepper, the New York City-based Canadian

editor/publisher named as Gibson's replacement, clearly doesn't think the situation was grim. “I wouldn't base [the New York City] I believed that, far from Canadian publishing shrinking about, I think it's turned a corner.” As for declining interest in non-fiction, Pepper's M&S search is that area especially why M&S sought him out. “Look at his list at Crown Publishing,” notes Roy MacKinnon, author of *The Penguin*.

Trade in M&S wasn't idle in the history of Canadian publishing. “There's a lot of commercially successful non-fiction on it,” David Dendler, Penguin Canada's new

publisher and an old friend of Pepper's, agrees. “With titles on fiction,” he says, referring to M&S's highly regarded fiction editor, Ellen Seligman, “and Doug on non-fiction, M&S will be a powerhouse.”

Dendler is also impressed by his friend's “exceptionally good pulse line.” He dropped into Pepper's New York City office a few weeks ago and asked him if he had any plans to come back to Toronto. “He already decided that one—I didn't get a hint.”

Literary non-fiction has been surprising publishers lately with its popularity, leading some to fret it's the source of future profits, given the slowdown in fiction sales abroad. (Canadian fiction is the U.S., “more so very they were lining up farm,” says one insider, another author.) “Who would have thought



Margaret MacMillan's *Papa 1939* would sell 120,000 copies,” says Random House of Canada COO Brad Martin. “Our sales are doing well, we've 3,500 copies.” It's not easy

to pick winners at a publisher's biggest press, one in which books are often more sensitive and unappealing under their home market.

Fiction does travel better. Pepper acknowledges, and is at it when prize-givers has become the engine that drives novel sales. “Canada is probably underappreciated as non-fiction—we could do with better non-fiction prices, like the U.S. Publishers’ list.” He also likes to see more non-fiction titles.

Butterflies—well, like Richard Clarke's polemically loaded *Against All Enemies*. “Think of the power of that book to change the land scape. More of that in Canada would be a very healthy thing.”

Cultural impact is all well and good, but Pepper's frank about his mission: “I'm going in with certain fiscal goals. Random House, a part owner of M&S, is involved in that, and they're making us work with their thinking, having worked for them for 17 years. Publishing is all about making your numbers.” Still, M&S remains “fully accountable,” Pepper insists. “At, again, I wouldn't have taken the job. I want to build on the tradition of the place. It's the name, it's got the authors, and like everyone else in Canadian publishing I want it to thrive.” ■

There's being pulled in two directions...

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Gardening

THE GREAT GREEN NORTH

So what if the growing season is short? Canadian gardens are second to none. You should see for yourself.

YOUR OPERATORS—ever ones to overlook a growing market—offer packages with garden enthusiasts in mind. Want to see classic, herbaceous borders? A trip to southern England—including a visit to one of Vita Sackville-West's Strawberry Castle Gardens—is the ticket. After something more exotic? Check out, for instance, Queen Wilhelmina's Park on the outskirts of Wellington which is dedicated solely to the conservation of New Zealand's native plant life. But Canadians seeking inspiration for their own homes on Earth—whether the back forty or a container-filled balcony—really don't have to leave the country. Canada's wealth of great gardens, and, while ones increase, they demonstrate exactly which places stand a chance of not just surviving but thriving in our challenging climate. And while the

the moment may grade plant selection, a bias to leaving no garden style. The lush Butchart Gardens in Victoria, the 18th-century-style Innes garden of the Chateau Reimsay in Old Montreal, and the Harriet Irving Botanical Garden at Acadia University in Wolfville, N.S., are world apart not only geographically, but in terms of their scale, atmosphere and aesthetic. Your local municipal garden may also have much to offer. Already this year, 268 cities, towns and villages have registered to participate in national and provincial competitions sponsored by Communities in Bloom, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to urban beautification. (When the program was launched in 1995, just 29 municipalities got involved.) Maclean's has picked five great public access gardens that illustrate a great Canadian trend, diversity.

DR. SUN YAT-SEN CLASSICAL CHINESE GARDEN

Location: Vancouver

Open: Daily. Closed Mondays, November to April. Highlights: First fall water channel garden built outside China. Incorporates water, rock and Ming dynasty architecture, assembled using centuries-old techniques.

VANCOUVER'S Chuanwen is an exotic, chaotic mess on the senses. Boxes of peonies bloom by fragrant stiff-necked displays of tea, fruit and fish, and oval jugs add to the gossamer shopping. Tricubic tile. Marja blue. The clarity of truth pang like falls from the upper windows of venerable social clubs. Chuanwen is anything but peaceful, with one notable exception. Tucked behind the Chinese Cultural Centre at the corner of Keefer and Carroll streets, the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden is a calming oasis. There, behind spare white walls, is a faithful reproduction of the private gardens of Suzhou, China, which reached their zenith as an art form during the Ming dynasty of 1368 to 1644. "People come through the doors," says Yvonne Chan, executive director of the gardens, "and they find as if they've been transported to another place and another time."

Inside, the sounds of the city fall away. You tilt your head just to catch the looting downpour—late raindrops and unbridled natural world opens before you. The elements of the garden—water, rock, plants and architecture—are arranged according to the Taoist belief of yin and yang, that harmony is created in a balance of opposites. Thus, dark is joined with light, hard with soft. Smooth shades of bamboo grow by rough rock outcrops from

PHOTOGRAPH BY JENNIFER HARRIS

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Chlorine does. The sense of serenity is obvious, but the layers of symbolism and meaning are best understood by taking one of the frequent guided tours.

The garden reveals itself slowly, behind walls and courtyards and ponds in its covered walkways. Light and herbs of waxes to cover walls through elaborate grills, appropriately called "kōki" windows. "There are no straight lines within the garden," says Chai. "It mimics nature and it flows you down." Although it covers barely 14 per cent of a hectare, it seems far larger.

"Barkes and I discovered how gliding pond water the colour of milky green jade Chai claims to be one of her favourite sites, a "mossman" both of imported limestone, worn by water into fantastically convoluted art. Such mineralized mosses, topped with a garden or "rock," were included in gardens to lure the immortals too Earth to upset their wondrous, the sage.

The garden's open by western standards. The flows may rest on a single plane and its relationship to its environment and to the seasons. It's early spring, and the garden is alive with colour: the majesty of a lily of the valley beds, the silvery-pink blossoms of a carnation, the burning buds of a tree peony that will explode into pink, plum-like scarlet flowers in two open buds. Each season offers its own rewards. The flower's language, the blurring leaves of autumn. In winter, there's the evergreen of pine and bamboo, the delightful winter flowering plant, the skeletal display of rock and branch.

Its greatest gift in any season is the sense that the garden has named you in a different, gentle, plain. "I don't know what it is or how it works," says Chai, "but people come out here once again."

Seeds for thought

- Give your plants space and time to bloom.
- The whole garden doesn't need to be flowering at the same time. Plants with a succession of blooming periods provide ongoing interest.
- If the underlying structure is attractive, a garden will still be appealing in winter.

REN MARQUEE

MORRIS RESEARCH STATION

Location: Mandon, Man., 115 km south-west of Winnipeg

Open Monday to Friday

Highlights: The admission with its wide selection of shrubs and trees, including cold tolerant fruit plants, are a mostly apple trees. The landscaped grounds around the offices and laboratories.

THE AGRICULTURE AND Agri Food Canada Morris Research Station is a local scene where families grow pumpkins or have their wedding photos taken. But Morris has



Prairie Joy is one of the Morris research centre's roses in the popular Parkland series.

arguably had an impact on all Canadians. At the fall name trials, it is first and foremost a research centre, one of 19 local facilities across Canada. Collectively, they've developed, over decades of trial and error, thousands of varieties of plants hardly known to those in the Canadian climate. Since opening in 1975, Morris staff has introduced over 100 plant types. Many of those were—and are—for commercial crops, the fruit, leaves and pine. The house garden has most likely heard of the centre in connection with other sorts of plants, with such names as Morris Belle and Morris Snowflake. They're roses—with attitude.

What roses grow in the Northern Hemisphere are around the globe and were first introduced in Asia 5,000 years ago. Even so, gardens in more temperate regions traditionally had a wider—and warmer—selection. But with its so-called Parkland series, first introduced in 1963, Morris has developed beautiful roses capable of surviving winter temperatures as low as -35°C with a minimum of snow cover, and then blooming all summer. They're a northern gardener's dream, popular not only in Canada, but for northern U.S. and Scandinavia as well. The Canadian government, in fact, has

been in the business of breeding roses since 1886. Morris got into the act in the 1970s and has produced new roses every decade since. It can take many years to hybridize a plant suitable for the nursery trade. Canada's other major rose breeding program, the Explorer series that had been developed first at Ottawa and then at Sault Ste. Marie, Quebec, has been phased out. Still, that's not the end of Morris' work. The centre is carrying these already in the marketplace as long as they remain popular with the rose-loving public. And some of the Explorer work was used and incorporated into a new breeding program and now as a joint venture with the private sector. In keeping with changing times, the new series, which will be targeted for Canadian markets, is focusing more on production-oriented roses with flowers in the white, yellow and orange color ranges. None of these are likely to be commercially available for at least the next five years. But some of the Morris facility take visitors past the field trials—a great opportunity for a rose peek.

Seeds for thought

- You don't have to give up anything, as the beauty department for plants that are cold-hardy.

BARBARA WICKENS

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND BOTANICAL GARDEN

Location: St. John's

Open: May 1 to Nov. 30, seven days a week

Highlights: The rock garden, including a limestone/barnes garden, and the peat and woodland beds; rare native plants, many not seen outside Newfoundland.

THIS IS A WORKING garden, a research facility and a botanical garden all rolled into one. In operation since 1977, the garden includes five nature trails through a 45-hectare reserve, displaying native plants in a variety of natural settings, including bogs, ponds, barrens and boreal forest. The garden also shows different cultivated plants that grow well in the local climate. "The concept is that you can't grow anything in Newfoundland as blown right out of the water," says Wilf Nichols, who runs the garden. "People are overwhelmed by what you can grow here."

The trail system is another eye-opening

Nichols says many out-of-province visitors have seen nothing like Newfoundland's bog, fern and barrens lands, with pitcher plants, rare orchids, and "plants found nowhere else." Then there are the maintained gardens, which are broken up into small "rooms" including a heritage garden with plants and glass displays donated by Newfoundlanders in cities where they have lived for 200 years and more, a composing demonstration garden and a medicinal plants garden. "You feel like you're going to be of different places in this garden," Nichols says, "but you've moved only steps."

Recent research projects at the facility include finding and developing native species that will survive in areas like highway verges and former mines, and operating a conservation site to try to regenerate endangered and threatened Newfoundland plants, including the Long's brook and Arnold's brook.

The rock garden offers visitors a glimpse of rare and native Newfoundland plants.

two rare plants in the mistle and flycatcher only on the Timpano barrens of the province's west coast.

The botanical garden even celebrates one of Newfoundland's commercial crops—a spruce natural Forest Forested much fall in honour of the array of potato varieties recently developed in the province. "We like to grow potatoes, use potatoes—they all have different flavours—and we want people to have fun with potatoes."

Seeds for thought

- Don't be afraid to try new things, especially rare plants.

BARBARA WICKENS

ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDENS

Location: Hamilton

Open: Daily

Highlights: The Rock Garden, carved in an abandoned gravel pit; Heritage Garden, featuring plants typically grown in Ontario gardens between 1880 and 1910; Coccoi

Parade, where a section of the Niagara Escarpment, a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve, runs through the RBG.

FOR A MONTH starting in mid-May the Lido Dell will be awash in delicate pinks and whites, deep rich purples and blues and every shade of, well, blue in Mother Nature's palette. But it's not just a feast for the eyes, the sweet scent of the flowers is intoxicating—fragrant proof that nature has well and truly arrived. The RBG has scheduled its annual blue festival this year for May 23, 24 and 30. For anyone willing to forgo the children's activities, concerts and guided tours can visit when it best suits—or when the plants are at their best (check weekly on) With over 800 cultivars of blues—the RBG bills it the largest blue collection in the world—the Dell can provide a rewarding day's ramble.

The RBG traces its origins back to the 1920s, when Hamilton decided to beautify the city's northwest and began acquiring land. Work began in 1929 as a former gravel



po which is now a rock garden where 100,000 spring tulips are replaced by nixie-like displays of summer annuals. The garden also has several massive waterfalls that bloom profusely—the trailing pansies look for all the world like a massive waterfall.

The Royal Botanical Garden—King George V proclaimed the royal charter in 1941—as quietly added new levels over the decades.



Lilacs have their own annual to rival at Hamilton's Royal Botanical Garden.

Today, at 1,200 ha, the RBG is not only the largest botanical garden in Canada, but one of the largest in the world. And like most modern botanical gardens, its objectives are not only aesthetic and recreational but scientific and educational as well. It can be difficult to trace them apart. After all, who heeds more from the Ontario tree and shrub collection? Scheuchzeria who have a rare opportunity (most examples of many of the 90 species native to the province) Botanists studying the trees' genetic material? Or perhaps horticulturists admiring autumn colours as they take advantage of the 30 km of interpretive trails weaving around Coates Ponds?

For plant aficionados or casual visitors alike, the sheer expanse of the place is often all that matters. It's best just to stonk comfortable shoes, clear the mind and take time to smell the roses—perhaps eat all 2,500 bushes in the Coates Ponds Rose Garden. Still, that number is dwarfed by the six count: some 250,000 are planted throughout the grounds. The RBG can be excused for describing itself as "Paradise Found."

Seeds for thought

■ A lot of one kind of plant makes a more dramatic display than one of a lot of different plants.

■ A forest can contribute much to the enjoyment of a garden as how plants look. ■ W

LES JARDINS DE METIS

Location: Grand Metis, Que., about 350 km east of Quebec City

Open: Daily June 1 to mid-October

Highlights: A national historic site. Nine terraces, including the Friends Glade and the Long Walk (at 90 m the only straight line in the entire garden), feature some 3,000 species of native and imported plants.

ALSO KNOWN as the Belard Gardens in honour of creosote like Belard, this is one of the most extravagant and exquisite great gardens in Canada. In very contrast, confirms my suspicion: the period person I'll buy at the supermarket for my balcony this summer should come with a caution not unlike those on cigarette packs: "Warning! Gardening can be addictive, and lead to serious gardenitis. Consult a specialist at the earliest symptoms."

Take Belard as an example: in 1918, her wife, Lord Mount Stephen, who had retired as president of the Canadian Pacific Railway and moved to England, gave her his summer estate on a hill overlooking the Gulf Peninsula. She turned the lodge on the 400 ha property into a 37-room, two-

storey summer house. Over the years, she transformed the estate into a garden where northern trees and shrubs could thrive.



storey summer house. Over the years, she transformed the estate into a garden where northern trees and shrubs could thrive. She imported exotic plants from around the world on Canard, as her husband, Robert Belard, was in Canadian agriculture. Over a 30-year period she created a new world of splendour, ever changing, personal splendour.

People who know gardening come from as far away as Europe and Asia to admire her legacy. Some very rare and fragile plants—Hemerocallis blue poppies, gaura lilies, rhododendrons—still grow almost 40 years after her death. The estate itself came in droves, perhaps unaware of the horticultural prowess represented, but inspired by the master's harmony of all. Like Belard, sensitive to beauty and familiar with moose workings, had the vision, and heart, to create a huge, living, work of art.

Seeds for thought

■ A fabulous garden can grow even in a region with long winters and short summers. ■ Just dig it, the best way to learn about gardening is by doing it. ■ Don't worry about accomplishing everything at once—Belard's garden evolved over three decades. ■ DON'T AURIN

THE CHANGING FACE OF TELEVISION

by David A. Greenberg and John F. Greenberg



In most Canadian homes, Hockey Night in Canada is a Saturday ritual. So when CBC-TV broadcast last November's Heritage Classic game between alumni of the Edmonton Oilers and Montreal Canadiens in digital high-definition television (HDTV) format, it was a clear sign that digital TV has hit the mainstream.

"Hockey was made for HDTV and HDTV was made for hockey," comments Fred Mattocks, executive director of English television production and resources for CBC-TV. "You can really see the way the game is developing, and it's easy to follow the puck."

Next season, ABC expects to carry some NHL games in high definition. ABC will also have NHL playoffs in HDTV. Next summer, NBC will have high-definition coverage of the 2004 Olympics.

cost of time. And, depending on what features it offers, you might be paying a little bit more for the convenience of a plasma screen.

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A MARATHON ENDEAVOUR

Nobody—myself included—ever expected me to run 42 km. So I did.

AS I HAD imagined it, the finish of my first marathon was destined to be a slow-motion triumph of grit and determination, accompanied by Queen's *We Are the Champions*. My cheering family, all love and tears, would hoist me to their shoulders in a shouted word of victory and inspiration. The next day I would field calls from Oprah. But honestly, with a lifetime to go as last October's Chicago marathon, all I was really concerned about was remembering to breathe.

At age 27, five foot five and 150 lb., I'm not exactly what you'd call an elite athlete.

Growing up, I was the bookworm in an athletic family. Still, my parents tried their best, enrolling me for skating and swimming lessons, in soccer league and in tennis camps. But I favored the wheel and self-conscious me, the girl who made high school and university teams because of her spirit. To this day, I can ride the pure and abet energies with the very best.

Strangely, it was the way to park at Ontario Place in Toronto that set me on the path to Chicago. After my first year as a waitress, I

Six months later, I found myself at the starting line holding hands with my two cousin partners. Amazingly both were still smiling after putting up with months of my whining, self-doubt and newly acquired flair for talking about the effects of running on my bowels. My cousin family, grandmother and cousins included, had flown in from Toronto to witness the unexpected. They had snugged out massage points along the marathon route and had mistaken the Chicago subway system so that they could cheer me

(not enquire during the slower you are, the further back you start) was an even more distinctive group. In my night, a marathon became a course, behind me, a loud group of overweight women from New Jersey, and in front, a 78-year-old man trying to beat his 2002 race time (I'm not sure whether he did, but he finished ahead of me). As the comradeship began, everyone started cheering. Spontaneously at first, then it was constant and deafening.

The sound of the starting gun is my last clear memory of the race. Apparently, Chicago is a really nice place. Apparently, I ran through its Chinatown and gay village and past Wrigley Field. Apparently, I ran down the Marilee Mile, but finally I did every mile I covered was a bloody miracle.

Every runner has his or her own motivation for wanting to complete a marathon.

One of my training partners, for instance, just thought it would be a nice thing to do when we were talking about it over a beer. For me, it was about proving I could do something people never expected me to do. That's why I endured training sessions five times a week through heat waves and snowstorms, painful knee and foot injuries and six months of sheer exhaustion. Looking back, I realize that's why I was so tired at that 42 km mark—I had



on and wore homemade signs of inner agreement when I needed it most. Running is always always classified as an individual sport, but there's no way I would have even gotten to the start of this race were it not for the support of others.

Speaking of others, some 40,000 runners were packed behind the starting line. And, to my relief, only 28 per cent were six feet tall with zero per cent body fat and an \$80,000 sponsorship. Or so I'm told. I couldn't actually see any of the real contenders because there were almost 24,000 runners between them and me. Where I lined up

been running for four hours, 46 minutes and seven years.

I can't tell you how I got through those last few minutes, but when I finally edged across the finish line, the only thing that resembled any training was the slow-motion part. I did master a single arm full of victory. But my family was lost in the crowd, Queen was obviously playing my life on Oprah and all I could mutter was, "It's over! Am I alive?"

Yes. But you're hurt.

Rebecca Gardner is now training for the May 14 marathon in Milwaukee. Get the complete story at overtoyou.mediobase.ca

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PHOTO PRINTS IN A FLASH

them, you can plug your camera right into same, while others offer slots for memory cards that cameras use to store digital images. The gadgets produce prints of quality comparable to what you get from photo developers, they're virtually shot-proof and they're

Verdict: If you shoot a lot of pictures and make a lot of prints, get one. It's worth it for the silver convenience, and the cost is reasonable. If you don't, ask yourself: just how big a hassle is a trip to the drug store? Our Pick: HP Development.



YOU CAN SKIP printing altogether and simply get a digital frame. The *VistaFrame* stores eight images (more with a memory card) and can cycle through them, slide-show style. Or you could tell people it's a mini flat-screen TV. \$289. www.vistoframecanada.com (online sale to stores).

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CLOSINGNOTES



People | Confessions of a teenage wannabe throwback

Lindsay Lohan is nearly ready for her close-up. But just seconds before a recent photo shoot, one of her hairdressers peeps in, spotting the 17-year-old actor's hair and checking her makeup. They needn't worry: Lohan, the star of *Mean Girls* (April 30)—based on Rosalind Wiseman's book, *Queen Bees & Wannabes*, and adapted by and co-starring *Saturday Night Live*'s Tina Fey—is a natural in front of the camera. Not surprising, considering the New York City native is a former child model with the prestigious Ford Models "At five," says Lohan, "I was doing shoots with Mischka Baran (The O.C.) and Kirsten Dunst."

That early work and appearances in more than 60 commercials—including *Bill Cosby's* *Jell-O Oatmeal*—led to Lohan's first big break. In 1998, she landed the lead in the remake of Disney's *The Parent Trap*, becoming the sta-

Lohan stars in the current teen comedy *Mean Girls*, adapted by SNL's head writer



dally "it" girl and starring in *Freddie Popko* (2003) and *Confessions of a Teenage Dream* (2004). Now, she's in talks for yet another turn in a Disney remake: the '60s classic *The Love Bug*, due out next year.

But Lohan says—and certainly looks like—she's ready to leave her teenybopper roles behind. During last week's promotional stop in Toronto for *Mean Girls*, she sported a pair of eye-catching quack boots and an ultra-tight tank top that needed constant attention just to keep things PG. Yet she claims to be a throwback—longing for a return to theater screen's golden age. "I wish the old Hollywood would come back," says Lohan, whose idol is Audrey Hepburn. "I love the way everyone dressed back then. It's a lot tougher to be sexy now than it used to be. That was a time when women could be hot without making all their clothes off."

JAMES BYRNE

TIP SHEET



MUSIC **and** **Comedian** "The Fur Side of the World" The winner of this year's Academy awards for cinematography and sound editing may be better on the big screen—but the new DVD is less likely to cause motion sickness.



NEW RELEASE **On My Mind** The latest album from this Greenville, S.C., artist is just *Woozie*, part *Footloose*, part *New York, New York*, part *Shine*. In other words, pop perfection.



TV **Movie** **at 10** Here are two words for why Jennifer Garner's new flick about a child trapped in an adult's body is worth the price of admission: *Thriller* cinematography OK, two more *Mean Girls*! **SAMIRA DIZEL**



Books | Even a farting dog has his day

Glena Murray has spent months on tour promoting his *Walter the Farting Dog* picture books, so it's no surprise that this *Frederick* won't vocabulary is full of flatulence double entendres—its "bars" this, "fiddle release" that, other things that "just don't cut it." He's enthusiastic about the audio-narrator guitar and a hoping others are now "I feel like I'm in the privies," he says. "I'm building Walter's own library."

It's working—the percolated pooch is gathering quite a following, despite his noxious habits. The second *Walter* book, *True Me at the Yard Sale* by Murray and co-author William Katt (aka *Me*—was released last month and holds the No. 1 spot on the New York Times children's picture book best-seller list. The original book sits at No. 2. Another four children's books are large enough to play with sound effects and sounds and sniff sections. *Farting Walter* says will be available soon, and the authors are angling a deal for a television movie.



Murray's books are on a NYT best-seller list—but more importantly, they get young boys reading.

"I've always thought Bill Murray should play Walter, without a costume," jokes Murray, 51. "But that's on the studio's hands."

Even with all this new-found fame, Walter remains a man with a mission—at wit in criticism. After working for New Brunswick's Ministry of Education for 20 years, Murray knows there's no better way to get boys reading than to write about their favorite, often gross, subjects.

"The literacy angle is a big element for me," he says. "Finding a book that gets kids these days is a challenge. Librarians and teachers love Walter because kids want to read about him." And it's not only younger kids who are in on the joke—or one reading at Toronto last year, women over 70 made up most of the audience. "Walter's got appeal across the board," says Murray. "We've been uncomfortable talking about him. Now, all the crap that has gone into suppressing him can go to something more meaningful." **KATHY WAGNER**

TV | Italian culture brought to you by...

Domenico Libretti thinks the Italian culture in Canada is under attack. That's why the marketing manager with RAI television—a branch of Italy's state broadcaster—is fighting to get RAI its own channel over here. "RAI links Italians living abroad to their home," says Libretti, who's looking after the bid to the CRTC for a digital channel.

There appears to be no shortage of support. More than 180,000 Italian Canadians signed a petition supporting RAI. (Watch locations in 130 countries, and Rogers, Cable Junction, like Marlene, is a vocal by Rogers' Communications) is sponsoring the bid. Available is, the CRTC forbids foreign-owned broadcasters from entering the market when a domestic broadcaster already provides similar content. And TeleItalia network has long been on the scene.

“All of a sudden we’re not worthy in year 20 after being worthy and well received for 19 years.”
—president of TeleItalia

For nearly 20 years, TeleItalia has been purchasing over 50 per cent of all prime-time programming from RAI. But the partnership ended last August, with RAI ending deals over how TeleItalia edited its programs. "A lot of sudden we're not worthy in year 20 after being worthy and well received for 19 years," says TeleItalia president Aldo Di Felice. "They're effectively saying we'd like to do it ourselves." As of last week, the CRTC was still reviewing the situation. **JOHN DUNN**



RAI supports ITTS, a CRTC in Quebec, Que.

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TO THE BRINK AND BACK

Somehow, startling revelations about the 1995 referendum aren't news

SHORTLY BEFORE the 1995 secession referendum, Jacques Parizeau sent a former Quebec industry minister named Rodolphe Baron to negotiate directly with Prime Minister Jean Chrétien over the steps that would follow a "No" victory.

"His fitting expedition yielded 'astonishing results,'" Pierre Duchesne wrote in *Regrès*, the third volume in Duchesne's epic biography of Parizeau.

The former leader, whose party held almost as many seats as the Bloc Québécois in the Commons, would have followed even the narrowest Yes victory by taking a minister in the

Parizeau had appointed a cabinet minister full-time to produce said six showing how easy the transition to sovereignty would be. Unfortunately, the transition to sovereignty wouldn't be easy and the minister, Richard LeBlanc, was a bullhead. The whole process became a laughingstock.

Now Duchesne reveals that Parizeau set up a secret parallel secretariat to produce the real studies on relations between Canada and a sovereign Quebec. What follows is technical but important: the only way to avoid "absolutely enormous costs" as Canada's internal economy disintegrated, an operation of the secret secretariat says, would be to form a Canada-Quebec customs union with common external tariffs. Which meant Quebec couldn't send its own representative to global trade talks at GATT or the WTO.

Duchesne writes that Parizeau took one look at his best thinkers' best work and went ballistic. No Quebec trade envoy? Forget it, he said. Quebec would send its own envoy—but it would only be pretending to be an independent country. Parizeau admits that "Quebec could adopt the Canadian tariff and when the Canadian government changed the tariff we would do the same thing." And he didn't want to have from eggheads telling him otherwise. "Show your report. Disband the committee. That's all what I want."

Now the layers of deception and self-deception here—a secret report, a refusal to believe work Parizeau himself had commissioned. There's more of that all through the book. The 1995 question famously didn't include the word "country." Duchesne reveals that it used to say, "Do you agree that Quebec should become a sovereign country?" But polls showed the Yes vote rose if they took the word "country" out. So it went.

There is so much more in this book. Our country came to the brink, and that is the best chronicle so far of how it happened. That apparently that's not "news."

To comment: backpage@mac.com or send Paul Wells a letter, "Back Page," at www.mac.com/tw/pweller/bp



House of Commons demanding that Jean Chrétien resign as prime minister. "It was a vote of confidence timed only at the prime minister's, not at the government in its entirety." Manning told Duchesne in an email shortly two months ago. He would also have demanded that the Bloc abandon its position as the official Opposition in favour of Reform. And he would have demanded that negotiations begin at once for Quebec's departure from Confederation.

Manning warned Parizeau's minority the negotiations wouldn't be "a walk on the pink." Given what was known at the time about Manning's preferred bargaining position, which included the territorial portion of a seceding Quebec, this was an understatement. Parizeau's man couldn't care less. They took great comfort in Manning's position. "Manning thought the Yes would win," Jean-François Laroche, one of Parizeau's most trusted advisors, tells Duchesne. "For him, the decision rule was 50 per cent plus 1. For us, this was enormous."

Now, you can almost imagine yourselves the significance of all this. I'm not trying to make Manning look like a goat. Maybe he looks like a hero. I'm just aware that weeks after Duchesne's book hit the bookshelves (it's available only in French), nobody is talking about this as the decision of other new nations to secede.

to the wall. More than eight years after the fact, Duchesne, a Radio-Canada reporter, has produced what amounts to the first in-depth history of the 1995 referendum. He covers only the secession side, but that's where the action was, after all. He had unparalleled access to Parizeau's papers and to his advisers. There is a revelation every 10 or 12 pages. Yet the bulk of the coverage his book has received concentrates on a silly little soap opera.

Duchesne writes that Bernard Landry demanded Parizeau's resignation the morning after the infamous "money and ethics votes" speech—and wanted to take over the job of premier in his absence. Landry now denies it. There has been public sniping between the two men. Several newspapers have been critical by the episode.

Who cares?

Meanwhile, here's what else is in Duchesne's book.



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